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Authors' and Translators'
STORY COMPETITION

ENCOUNTER magazine, in association with INTERNATIONAL P.E.N., is offering the following prizes for the best English translation of short stories originally written in one of the Asian, Arabic or African languages:

1st PRIZE: £100 to the author, £100 to the translator.
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The following have agreed to act as judges: GRAHAM GREENE, STEPHEN SPENDER, ANGUS WILSON & GERARD HOPKINS.

There is no limitation as to subject, but the following rules are binding on all competitors:

1. Not more than one story by any author will be considered. It may be submitted either by the author or the translator, with the full approval of the other. The author may not be his own translator. The length should be between 2,500 and 5,000 words.
2. The story submitted should not have previously been published in English translation, although a translation already commissioned for publication in book form not earlier than March 31st, 1959, will be eligible. *The translation only should be submitted*, although a version in the original language should be available for the judges if asked for.
3. The following particulars should be clearly set out on an accompanying sheet (not a letter): The title of the story; the language from which translated; length; name, address and nationality of the author; name, address and nationality of the translator; and an assurance that the translation will not have appeared elsewhere before March 31st, 1959.
4. Entries should be typewritten and addressed to ENCOUNTER (Story Competition), 25 Haymarket, London, S.W.1, *to arrive not later than October 31st, 1958*. Entries cannot be acknowledged and will only be returned if accompanied by a suitable self-addressed envelope and adequate postage (British Postal Order or International Reply Coupons).
5. The winning stories will be published in ENCOUNTER, which shall also have first option on any other entries considered suitable for publication at current rates. The judges reserve the right to withhold the prizes if, in their opinion, no suitable entries are received.
6. The judges cannot enter into correspondence about entries and their decision is final.

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Reynolds Price

A Chain of Love

A Story

THEY had observed Papa's birthday with a freezer of cream, even if it was the dead of winter, and they had given him a Morris chair that was not brand-new but was what he had always wanted. The next morning he took sick, and nobody could figure the connection between such nice hand-turned cream that Rato almost froze to death making and a heart attack which was what he had according to Dr. Sledge.

Of course, Papa didn't want to go to any hospital. He would die at home if it was his time, he said, but Dr. Sledge and the family saw it different so they carried him in to Raleigh to the hospital in Milo's car, pulled out the back seat that hadn't been taken out since Milo stopped going around with that Abbott girl, and spread a pallet and laid him out back there on pillows with his head resting on the hand-painted one off the settee, the grey felt one from Natural Bridge, Virginia, that he had brought Miss Pauline, his wife, six years before she died, off that two-day excursion he went on with the County Agent to the model peanut farms up around Suffolk.

As much as she wanted to, Mama just couldn't get away to stay with Papa right then. She made him a half a gallon of boiled custard like he asked her to, to take along, and she rode to Raleigh with them, but she had to come on back with Milo in the afternoon. It worried her not to be able to stay with Papa, but they were having a Children's Day Exercises at the Church that coming Sunday—mainly because the Christmas pageant had fallen through when John Arthur Bobbitt passed around the German measles like a dish of cool figs at the first rehearsal—and since Mama had organised the local chapter of Sunbeams almost single-handed, she couldn't leave them now, right on the verge of public performance. So they took Rosacoke and Rato along to stay with Papa for the first few days until Mama could come up herself. There was no need to take on a full-time nurse for him, Dr. Sledge said, with two strong children in the family dying to sit with him, anyway.

From the first minute Papa had his attack, there wasn't any question of Rosacoke not going with him if he had to go. She sort of liked the idea of going to the hospital. In fact, there was only one thing that made her think twice about it, which was that she would miss one Saturday night with Wesley. Wesley Beavers was her boyfriend, even if her Mama didn't like the idea of Rosacoke going in to town with a boy two years older than her every Saturday night to the show and sitting in his car with him—and Rato up there on the porch in the pitch dark looking all the time—and telling him good-bye. That was the best part of any week—telling Wesley good-bye like she did when he would pull his Pontiac up in the yard under the pecan tree, and all those little spring frogs if they were alive would be singing-out over behind the creek, and then for a minute they would be

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quiet like they had all died together or had only stopped to catch their breath.

But Wesley would be there when she got back, and anyway, going to the hospital would give her a chance to lay out of school for a week, and it would give her all that time with Papa. She liked to be with her Papa. Rosacoke's Papa was her Granddaddy. Her own Daddy was dead, run over by a green pick-up truck one Saturday evening late, a long time ago, almost before she could remember.

But Rato could remember. Rato had seen a lot of things die. He was named for his Daddy, and he was the next-to-oldest boy, nearly nineteen. His real name was Horatio Junior Mustian. Rato didn't mind staying with Papa either. He didn't go to school, hadn't gone in four years, so he didn't have the pleasure of laying out like Rosacoke did. But seeing all the people would be enough for Rato. Not that he liked people so much. You could hardly *get* Rato to speak to anybody, but if you let him alone he would get all the pleasure he needed out of just standing there, taller than anybody else and thinner, and watching them.

DR. SLEDGE had called on ahead, and they didn't have any trouble getting Papa in the hospital. He even had the refusal of a big corner room with a private bath, but it was twelve dollars a day, and there was no use to try the good will of Blue Cross Hospital Insurance. Papa said that himself. So he took a ten-dollar one that was standing empty right across the hall, and they wheeled him in on a table pushed by an old coloured man who introduced himself as Snowball Mason and turned out to be from Warren County too, up around Sixpound Township, and made Papa feel at home right away. They laid him real easy on the bed, with all his clothes on that he had insisted on riding in, and before he could get his breath good, in came a nurse who got around that adjustable bed on her stumpy legs like she was on roller skates, with her dyed black hair screwed up and bouncing around her face, and called Papa "darling"—you would have thought she had known him all her life—and tried to get him in one of those little night shirts the hospital furnished free of charge without showing *everything* he had to the whole group. Everybody thought she was real cute, except Rosacoke, who had undressed her Papa before and could do it in the dark.

The nurse finally got Papa fixed and stepped back to look at him like she had just made him out of thin air. Before she left she combed his hair and said she would be seeing lots of him in the daytime. Milo said it was a pity they couldn't have somebody that peppy around Papa night and day. But Rosacoke said she could manage fine and wasn't exactly a moper herself. And Papa agreed to that.

As soon as the nurse got out—after coming back once to get a bobby pin she had dropped on the bed—everybody began inspecting Papa's room. There was a good big sink where Rosacoke could rinse out her underwear that she hadn't brought much of and Rato's socks. (Anywhere Rato went, he just took the clothes on his back.) And Mama liked the view out of the window—right over the ambulance entrance where you could see every soul that came in sick. She called Rato's attention to it, and the two of them looked out for a little while, but it was getting on towards four o'clock, and as much as she wanted to stay around to see what Snowball was serving for supper, Mama told Milo they would have to go. Mama couldn't stand to ride at night.

Practically before the rest of the family left, Rosacoke and Rato and Papa were all settled. There was one easy chair in the room that Rosacoke could sleep in, and since Rato couldn't see stretching out on the floor with *his* bones, he shoved in another chair out of the parlour down the hall. That dyed-haired nurse saw him do it. She gave him a look that would have dropped anybody else but Rato dead in his tracks, and she said, "You camping out or something, Big Boy?"

"No'm. Setting with my Papa," was all Rato said.

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THE first thing Rosacoke did when Mama and Milo left was to open up her grip and spread out her toilet articles all over the glass-top bureau. That was about all she brought with her, except for two dresses and a copy of *Hit Parade Tunes and Lyrics* so she could get in some good singing with the two-station radio over Papa's bed. And right at the last minute her Mama had stuck in what was left of the saltwater taffy Aunt Oma sent from Virginia Beach that summer. It seemed like such a good idea too. Nurses always hung around a patient who had his own candy like Grant around Richmond, Mama said.

Papa didn't object at all to Rosacoke looking at herself all afternoon in the big bureau mirror and painting her face to try it out. Her Mama would have jerked a knot in her if she could have seen the sight Rosacoke was making of herself, but Papa always said Rosacoke looked like a picture show star, and since the only picture show Papa had ever seen was *Birth of a Nation*—and that was forty years ago in the old Henderson Opera House with a four-piece band in accompaniment—then it must have been Lillian Gish he thought Rosacoke looked like. And she did a little, not as tiny but small all the same—and she already had her full growth almost—with a heart-shaped face and long yellow hair and blue eyes. That was what Rosacoke liked the best about her face, the eyes. They were big, and it was hard to say where the blues left off and the whites began because everything there was more or less blue, and out of the far corner of her left eye there came this little vein, real close under the skin, that always seemed to Rosacoke to be emptying off some of all that blue and carrying it on down to her pale cheek.

But she couldn't stay there staring at herself all the time—she wasn't that good looking, and she knew it already—so after the doctors began to ease up with the visits on the second day, Rosacoke got a little tired. That is, until the Volunteer Worker from the Ladies' Guild came in in a pink smock and asked if maybe they wouldn't want some magazines, or a deck of cards maybe? She had a push-cart with her full of razor blades and magazines and things, and all Rosacoke had to do was to look at her Papa, and he, so happy with a lady visitor, pointed to his little black purse on the table. The best thing Rosacoke bought was a deck of Bicycle Playing Cards. Her Mama would have had a spasm if she could have seen Rosacoke right there in the bed with her Papa teaching him to play Honeymoon Bridge and Go-Fishing, which she had learned awhile back from town girls on rainy days at little recess. She decided in advance not to even say anything about Slap-Jack. That was her favourite game, and she knew Papa would have just loved it, but she had the sense to realise that he would get all excited waiting for a Jack to turn up and probably have a stroke or something. So they stuck to quiet games which Papa took to real well, and you could have knocked Rosacoke off the bed with a feather when *he* started teaching *her* and Rato to play Set-Back, playing the extra hand himself.

They could count on the cards keeping them busy until that Sunday, but they would have to do something with them then. Mama had told them she would be coming down on Sunday to stay some time with Papa. Milo would bring her up after Children's Day Exercises. Milo was her oldest boy, and he pretty much ran the farm alone with what help Rato could give him. He would probably have to bring Sissie along for the ride, even if Papa didn't like her one bit. Sissie was Milo's new wife. Just trying leaving Sissie *anywhere*.

THE doctors didn't tell Papa what was wrong with him, and Papa didn't tell them but one thing either, which was that he wanted to die at home. He told them they had been mighty nice to him, and he appreciated it, but he couldn't think of anything worse than dying away from home. They said they would take care of that, and they said he was to rest until they told him to stop and that they would send Dr. Sledge a full report on him. And Papa didn't worry. He had left it in their hands, and if a medical

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doctor had walked in one morning and said he had come to saw Papa's head off, Papa would have just laid his neck out on the pillow where the doctor could get at it. But the doctors didn't bother Papa for much of his time, and taking them at their word, he spent a good deal of every day sleeping. That was when Rato would roam the halls, never saying "p-turkey" to anybody, just looking around. And when Rosacoke could see that her Papa was asleep good, she would tip over and listen to his chest to make sure his heart was still beating regular before she would walk across the hall to the corner room, the one they had offered Papa. It was still empty, the door stayed open all the time, and she didn't see any reason for not going in. There was this gorgeous view out of the window of that room—a white statue of Jesus standing in front of the hospital holding his head bowed down and his hands spread out by his side. His chest was bare and a cloth was hanging over his right shoulder. Rosacoke couldn't see his face too well, but she remembered it from the day they brought Papa in. It was about the sweetest face she had ever seen. She was sure of that. And she came in that empty room more than once to look at him and to recollect his face like she knew it was.

But that didn't go on too long because on the third day Rato came in from sitting in the hall all morning and said they had just now put some fellow in that empty room. Rosacoke was sorry to hear it. It meant she wouldn't get to go over there in the afternoon anymore, but she didn't say that. She would rather die than tell Rato how much time she spent over there looking out a window.

Papa wanted to know who it was they had put in that twelve-dollar room, and Rato said it was a big man. Papa was a little disappointed too. He almost had it figured there was something wrong with that room lying empty three days like that. Rato said the man's wife and boy were with him.

"I expect it was his boy," Rato said. "Looked like he was anyhow. The man hisself didn't look a bit sick. Walked in on his own steam talking and laughing."

Rosacoke wanted to know if they were rich, but Rato couldn't say, said he didn't know. You couldn't ever tell about Rato, though, how much he knew. He wasn't anybody's fool. He just liked the idea of not telling everything he knew. Keeping a few secrets was about all Rato had.

"He's sure getting a nice room," Rosacoke said, and she had to walk over and button up her Papa's night shirt. She made him stay buttoned square up to the neck all the time because she couldn't stand to look at his old chest. Papa said he was hot as a mink and that his chest had been that hairy ever since he shaved it to be Maid of Honour in the womanless wedding Delight Church put on when he was seventeen years old.

Rato had been telling Rosacoke since the first day that she ought to walk down to the big ward at the end of the hall and see this old lady with all the cards. So on the afternoon they moved the man in across the hall, Rosacoke walked down there, and it was the way Rato said. There was a lady, older than God, lying in the first bed by the door, and up above her was a beautiful shower of greetings from her Sunday school class and her many friends, fanned out on the wall with Scotch Tape. Rosacoke thought she was asleep, but before she had been there ten seconds, the old lady shot bolt upright in bed and spoke in a voice that struck you more like scraping your fingernail down a black board than anything else. She asked Rosacoke to sit with her and hear about her getting religion at age seventy-two in front of a meeting of nearly two hundred people, but Rosacoke said "No thank you, ma'am" because she knew that once she sat down she would be there the rest of the day, and anyhow, she didn't like the old lady. It was nice for your friends to send you cards, Rosacoke thought to herself, but that wasn't any reason to make a show out of them like you were the only person in the whole hospital who had *that* many friends and all of them with nothing in the world to do but sit down and write you cards all day long.

She was walking back down the mile-long

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hall towards Papa's room when she saw him —not right at first—at first she was too busy looking at all the people lying back with their doors open. She didn't know a one of them, not even their faces the way Rato did. The only one she knew was Snowball standing in one room talking to some old man that looked so small in his little outing pajamas, with his legs hanging off the bed no more than an inch from the floor like thin dry tan gourds swinging in a wind on somebody's back porch somewhere. Snowball saw her and remembered her as being from Warren County, and he bowed to her. She started to stop and talk, but when she happened to look up, there he was—Wesley—sitting way down across from Papa's door, dressed to the ears and looking at the floor the way he always did. Wesley had ridden fifty-six miles to see her! She held herself in from running and speeded up her walking a little, trying to keep from looking like she had seen a ghost which was close to what she had seen considering it was the last thing you would expect Wesley Beavers to do. He hadn't seen her yet, and she could surprise him. She hadn't really missed Wesley so much up to now, but since he was here she knew how sorry she would be to miss a Saturday night with him.

She was almost on him, and he had his hand over his eyes for a minute—it would be Wesley all over to go to sleep waiting for her—so she came right up to him and said, "Good afternoon, Mr. Beavers, is there something I can do for you?" But it wasn't Wesley at all. It was somebody she hadn't ever seen before, somebody who didn't really look very much like Wesley, when you thought about it.

It took whoever it was a little while to realise she was talking to him, and when he looked up he looked sad and nearly as young as Rosacoke. He looked a little blank too, the way everybody does when you have called them by the wrong name, and they don't want you to know it. In a minute he said, "Oh no ma'am, thank you." "No ma'am"—like Rosacoke was some kind of nurse.

It just about killed Rosacoke to have done that like she was trying to get fresh with him. All that was left to say was, "Excuse me." And she almost didn't get that out before shutting Papa's door behind her. Rosacoke asked Rato, who was standing by the window having some Nabs and a Pepsi for lunch, to please peep out and see who that was sitting in the hall. As if Rato had ever peeped in his whole life. He had done plenty of looking but no peeping. So he just pulled open the door like he was headed for dinner or something and gave the boy a good look. Before he got the door closed good, he said, "Nobody but that man's boy from across the hall. That man they moved in to-day."

Rosacoke said, "Thank you," and later on that afternoon she wondered if, since he looked like Wesley, that boy could say goodbye like Wesley could.

If they didn't do anything else, those folks across the hall at least gave Papa something to think about. They kept their door shut all the time, except when somebody was going or coming, and even then they were usually too quick for Rato to get a good enough look to report anything. Something was bound to be wrong, though, because of all the nurses and doctors hanging around and the way the boy looked whenever he walked out in the hall for a few minutes. Rato reported that he saw the man's wife once. He said she was real pretty and looked like she was toting the burden of the world on her shoulders. Even Rato could tell that.

So Papa couldn't help asking Snowball the next time he got a chance what was wrong with that man. Snowball said he didn't know, and if he did he wouldn't be allowed to say. That made Papa pretty mad. He knew Snowball spent about two-thirds of his time in that man's room taking bedpans in and out, and it looked like to Papa that Snowball's white coat had made him a little uppity, had made him forget his Sixpound raising. And he told Snowball that at the top of his voice. Rosacoke could have crawled under the bed, but there was no stopping Papa once he got started. You just pretended hadn't a thing happened, and he would quiet down.

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She could tell it got Snowball's goat, though, and she was sorry. He walked out of Papa's room, his ice cream coat hanging off him like somebody had unstarched it.

That evening right before time for him to go home, Snowball came back in. He didn't have on his white coat, and that meant he was off duty. He had on his sheepish grin trying to show he had come on a little social call to see how Papa was making out, but Rosacoke knew right off that he had come to apologise to Papa, who was taking a nap, so she shook Papa and told him Snowball wanted to speak to him. Papa raised up and said, "Good evening, Snow."

Rosacoke couldn't help smiling at how Snowball turned into a snake doctor bobbing up and down around Papa. He said he just wondered how Mr. Mustian was coming on this afternoon, and did they have any old newspapers he could take home to start fires with? Papa said he was tolerable well and hadn't looked at a newspaper since the jimson weeds took over the Government. What he meant was the Republicans, and he said, "The bad thing about jimson weeds, Snow, is they reseeds theyselves."

But you could tell Snowball hadn't come in at five o'clock on his own time to hear that, and it didn't take him long to work his way over to Papa's bed and lean over a lot closer than Papa liked for anybody to get to him and say it the same way he would have told a secret, "Mr. Mustian, they fixing to take out that gentleman's lung."

"What you talking about, Snowball?"

"That Mr. Ledwell yonder in the room across the hall. He got a eating-cancer. That's what I hear his nurse say. But don't you tell nobody. I just thought you might want to know so soons I found out . . ."

"A eating-cancer? That's what it is?"

"They don't seem to be no doubt about it. I done already shaved his chest for surgery. He taking his operation in the morning at eight."

Papa wanted to know, "Is he going to live, Snowball?"

"Can't say, Mr. Mustian. He spit the first blood to-day, and alls I know is they ain't many lives past that. They ain't many. And if they lives you almost wish they hadn't. That's how bad they gets before it's over."

And Papa remembered that was the way it was with Mr. Jack Rooker, who swelled up to twice his natural size and smelled, a long time before he died. "I can recollect sitting on the porch in the evening and hearing Mr. Jack screaming clean across two tobacco fields, screaming for his oldest boys to just let him rest because there won't nothing nobody could do for him, not nothing. And I'd say to Pauline, 'Pauline, it don't look like Jack Rooker is ever going to die, does it?' "

That was a long time ago when Papa was a lot younger and a lot farther away from dying himself. That was why he could feel so for Jack Rooker back then. It had just seemed like Jack Rooker was going through something that wouldn't anybody else ever have to go through again.

SNOWBALL was nodding his head up and down saying, "I know, yes sir, I know." But Rosacoke could tell that Snowball had made his peace with Papa and was ready to leave so she stopped Papa from going on about Mr. Jack Rooker and told him it was time for Snowball to go home. Papa thanked Snowball for coming in, like he had never been mad at him a minute, and he told Snowball that he would be counting on him keeping them posted on all that happened to that fellow across the hall.

Rosacoke followed Snowball on out, "Snowball, what's that man's name again?"

"Mr. Ledwell."

"Is he really going to die, you think?"

"Yes'm, I believe he is. But, Miss Rosacoke, you don't have to worry yourself none about that. You ain't going to see him."

"I know that. I just wondered, though. I didn't even remember his name."

Snowball said he would be stepping along, and he would see her in the morning. But Rosacoke didn't hear from him until way in the next afternoon. Papa was taking his nap, and she was almost asleep herself when Snowball peeped in and, seeing Papa was

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asleep, whispered that the gentleman across the hall was back from his operation.

"How did it come out, Snow?"

"They tell me he doing right well, Miss Rosacoke."

"Has he waked up yet?"

"No'm, he lying in yonder under his oxygen tent running on about all sorts of foolishness like a baby. He be in some pain when he do come to, though."

"Are his people doing all right?"

"They holding up right well. That's his two sisters with his wife and his boy. They setting there looking at him and waiting to see."

She thanked Snowball for letting them know and said she would tell Papa when he woke up. When Snowball left she stepped into the hall herself. The door over there was closed, and for the first time it said "No Visitors." She wanted to wait until somebody opened the man's door. Then she could at least hear him breathing, if he was still breathing. But there wasn't a sound coming through that oak door as thick as your fist, and she wasn't going to be caught snooping around like Rato so she went back in to where Papa was awake playing a game of Solitaire, which that dyed-haired nurse had taught him how to play. That was *all* she had done for him.

SINCE they were away from home, they went to bed around ten o'clock. That is, they cut out the lights and Rosacoke would step in the closet and undress herself with the door half-shut. The first evening she had shut it all the way, and Papa told her there was no use to be so worried about him seeing her as he had seen her strip-strod naked two or three hundred times before she was old enough to walk, and then the talking would slow down, although Papa was liable to talk on for another hour in the dark about things he remembered. But it would all begin to quiet down soon enough, and Rato would be the first one to sleep. After Rosacoke's eyes had opened full to the dark, she could look over and see her brother stretched sideways on his chair with his long hands caught between his drawn-up knees and his head rolled back on his great thin neck and his mouth fallen open. Most people seemed to be somebody else when they were asleep. But not Rato. Rato went to sleep just like you expected he would, just like himself who had stopped looking for awhile. Then Papa would fall off, sometimes right in the middle of what he was remembering, and Rosacoke could see him too, but he was different—sweeter and with white hair that seemed in the night to be growing into the white pillow that his dark leather head rested on and holding him there for always.

After Papa slept Rosacoke was supposed to, but she couldn't this night. She kept thinking about it, the man and his boy. Papa had forgotten all about Mr. Ledwell. She hadn't told him anything about the operation, and she had asked Snowball not to tell him either. She didn't want Papa to start back thinking and talking about that poor man and asking questions and sending Rato out to see what he could. She had it all to herself now. Snowball had told her Mr. Ledwell's boy was staying with his Daddy through the nights. Mr. Ledwell had made the boy promise him that before he would go to the operating room, and the boy would be over there now, awake maybe, with his Daddy that was dying and she here on her chair trying to sleep, with her Papa and Rato, her Papa turned into something else in the night.

She might have gone on to sleep then if she hadn't thought of Wesley. If she was at home she could go to sleep knowing she would see Wesley at seven-thirty in the morning. He drove the school bus, and he went nearly four miles out of his way, on the state's gas too, to pick her up first so they could talk alone a few minutes before they looked up and saw all those Tharrington children up the road there knocking together in the cold and piling on the bus not saying a word, with purple splotches like thick cobwebs all down their legs that came from standing in front of an open fire, Mama had told her. And in winter afternoons Wesley would put her out last, into the cold white yard that would be nearly dark by five, and

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she would walk on towards the light that was coming already from the kitchen windows, steamed on the inside like panes of ice stretched thin on frames.

She remembered, lying there, that Wesley had said they were going in to Warrenton this Saturday to see a travelling exhibit sponsored by the Lion's Club. It was going to be an exact copy of the Florida State Electric Chair with some poor dummy strapped in it. Wesley was interested in anything mechanical, and she would have gone with him (there was no charge for admission the paper had said, only the chance to make a silver donation to the Club's Blind Fund) if that was what he wanted to spend the evening doing. You could count on him striking up friends with the owner of the Chair, whoever it was, and talking until time to head back home. But that would have been all right with Rosacoke. She would have waited and been glad if she had got the chance. But she wouldn't now, and Wesley would probably ask Martha Duke Aycock to go with him—which was what Martha Duke had been waiting for all her life. That was just Wesley. Let her miss school even two days at hog-killing, and he practically forgot her.

It was thinking about all this that kept Rosacoke from going on to sleep. She tried once or twice to empty her head the way she could sometimes at home, by closing her eyes and thinking way out in front of her, but she couldn't even do that to-night. In her bare feet she got up and felt for the closet door. She took her robe down from a hook and put it on. It was a peach-coloured chenille one that she had made herself, and it had been honourable mention entry at the 4-H Fall Dress Revue in the Warren County Armory before a grand turn-out of parents and friends. She took her shoes up in her hand and opened the door. The hall was empty and the only light was the one at the nurses' desk, and that was so white, shining into both ends of the long hall and against the white charts hanging in tiers. The two night nurses were not there, or she could have talked to them. Rosacoke hadn't ever talked to the night nurses, but they seemed nice enough not to mind if she did want to talk. They were probably out giving sleeping pills now so Rosacoke walked towards the big ward to pass time.

It was dark down there, and all these sounds came out to meet you a long time before you got to the door like some kind of Hell you were hearing from a long way away —a little moan strained out through old dry lips and the grating of each private snore as it tore its way out of the throats of the ones who were already asleep. Rosacoke stopped in the open door. The nurses were not there. About the only thing she could see was an old woman sitting up in her bed, bent all over on herself and scratching at her hair real slow.

Rosacoke knew there ought to be something you could do for these people, something you could say, even in the dark, that would make them know why you were standing there looking—not because you were well yourself and just trying to walk yourself to sleep but because you felt for them, because you hadn't ever been that sick or that old or that alone in all your life and because you wished they hadn't been either.

You couldn't stand there and say to the whole room out loud, "Could I bring you all some ice water or something?" because they probably wouldn't want that anyway, and even if they did, the first ones would be thirsty again and pitching around in their hot sheets before you could make it all around the room. You would be there all night, and it would be like trying to fill up No-Bottom Pond if it was ever to get empty.

From the open door of the ward, Rosacoke could see that one of the nurses was back at her desk, and she walked in that direction stopping to look at the flowers waiting outside the room of an old gentleman who said they breathed up too much of the good air at night. She was some way off when she saw the man's boy. There was no doubt about it being him this time, and she was not surprised to see him now.

The boy walked fast up to the nurse, his

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shirt open down the front, the white tails sweeping behind him in the light of the one lamp and his chest deep brown almost like he had been working in the field, but you knew he hadn't. Rosacoke could hear what he was saying. His voice trembled a little.

"My father's nurse says please call Dr. Davis and tell him to come now. It's serious."

The nurse took her time looking at a list of numbers under the glass on her desk, and then she called. She told whoever she talked to that Mr. Ledwell had taken a turn for the worse. Then she got up and walked into Mr. Ledwell's room. She told the boy to wait outside. He sat beside his father's door where Rosacoke had seen him that first awful time. Rosacoke looked on at all of it from the dark end of the hall. She wasn't going to walk by him in her bathrobe, even if it *had* won honourable mention, but she could see him plain because a table was by his chair, and he had turned on a small study lamp which lighted up his face that was so tired. His chin hung on his hand, a dead weight on a delicate scales, and his eyes were closed. If he had opened them and looked down towards the dark, he might have seen Rosacoke—at least her face—but he didn't. And when his eyes did open, they were the deepest and saddest eyes in the world to Rosacoke, that pulled hard at her, even though they didn't see her, and asked her—or maybe it was only the dark they asked—to do something.

But she didn't. She couldn't, after the mistake of that first time. She shuddered in the hard waves that flushed over her whole body and locked her there in the shadow. Once she put out her hand and her foot and took one small step towards the boy, whose head had dropped onto his folded arms, but the bleached light of the nurses' lamp struck her robe, and she dropped back the way one of those rain snails does that is feeling its way, damp and tender, across the long grass until you touch its gentle horns, and it draws itself back, hurt and afraid, into a tight piece that you would never guess could think or move or feel, even.

Rosacoke couldn't have said how long she stood there, getting so tired she knew how it felt to be dead, before the doctor they had called came in. He didn't have a tie on, and sleep was in his eyes. He saw the boy and touched him and said something, and they both walked into the room. Before they closed the door a sound like a mad child catching at his breath after crying ran out behind them to where Rosacoke was.

She didn't know what was happening, but the boy's Daddy might be dying. She knew that much. She felt almost sure that if the man died they would make some kind of public announcement. But he didn't die and she had waited so long she was almost asleep. The hall that she had to walk through back to Papa's room was as quiet now as a winter night in an attic room when you could look out the window and see a sky, cold and hard as a worn plough point, shining with the moon. All those old people in the ward were asleep, or maybe they had given up trying and waited. It seemed like when you waited at night for something—maybe you didn't know what—the only thing happened was that time made noise in a clock somewhere, way off.

IT WAS the next morning that Rosacoke made up her mind. If that Mr. Ledwell had lived through the night, she was going to call on him and his family. It was the only thing to do, the only Christian thing to do—to go over there and introduce yourself and ask if there was anything you could do to help like setting up at night. The way she felt about it, she might have gone over that very morning if it hadn't been that the room was so quiet. She hadn't seen a soul go or come since she woke up. She didn't know how Mr. Ledwell was getting along after everything that happened the night before. She didn't know if he had lived out the night. All she could do was to wait for Snowball to tell her. She wasn't going to ask Rato to do any more looking for her, after the last time.

Snowball was late coming by that morning, but he did get there finally, and he called her out in the hall to talk. He said Mr. Ledwell had a relapse the night before, and they

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thought he was going to pass away, but he pulled through unexpectedly.

"He not going to last long, though, Miss Rosacoke. The day nurse tell me he full of the cancer. It's a matter of days, they say, and he know that hisself. So all of us try to keep his spirits up. He ain't a old man. I old enough to be his Daddy. He resting right easy this morning, but he was bad sick last night. In fact, he was *dead* for a few minutes before the doctor came and brought him around. They does that right often now, you know."

That made Rosacoke think of the day the little Phelps boy fell in Fleming's Mill Pond, and some men from Warrenton pulled his body out, the mouth hanging open in one corner like a finger was pulling it down. They said that boy was dead as a doornail until those men pumped the air back in him. But what Rosacoke wanted to know was, where had Mr. Ledwell and the drowned Phelps boy gone if they had died for awhile? And if you were to ask them, could they tell you where they had been and what it was like there, or had they just been to sleep? She had heard that somebody asked the Phelps boy after he got well enough to go back to school what dying was like, and he said he couldn't tell because it was a secret between him and his Jesus. Rosacoke's Mama said that was about all you would expect out of a Phelps, anyway, and that she wouldn't have asked him if you had paid her cash money. Besides, she said, you couldn't just suppose—right off the bat—that the boy had gone to Heaven, and if he hadn't you could be mighty sure he wasn't going to admit going to the Other Place. Mama was pretty sure, you could tell, that *that* was where he waked up. She never had a kind word for any of the Phelpses since they bootlegged their way to big money some years ago. But not everybody felt the way Mama did. A church of Foot-Washing Baptists up towards South Hill heard about it and invited the boy up to testify but he wouldn't go. From then on Rosacoke had looked at that boy like he was something not quite natural, somebody that had seen Hell with his own eyes and had lived to tell the tale—or not tell it—and she had followed after him at little recess hiding where he couldn't notice her just so she could look at his face close up and see if his wonderful experience had made him any different. As it turned out it had. He was the quietest thing you could imagine, and his eyes danced all the time like he was remembering, and you couldn't ever know what, not ever.

Before Snowball left Rosacoke asked him what he thought about her going over and seeing Mr. Ledwell and his family.

"It couldn't do no harm I can think of, Miss Rosacoke, if you don't stay but a few minutes. He can't talk much with his one lung, but he be mighty happy to have a visitor for a little bit. You wait, though, till he get a little of his strength back from last night."

She wasn't planning on paying her visit right that minute, anyway. She had decided not to go over until she could take something with her. She might *be* from Afton, N.C., but she knew better than to go butting into some man's sick room, to a man on his deathbed, without an expression of her sympathy. And it had to be flowers. There was that much she could do for Mr. Ledwell because he didn't have any friends, because he and his family had moved to Raleigh less than six months ago. Snowball had found out the Ledwells were from Baltimore.

Of course, there wasn't a flower for sale anywhere in the hospital, and besides, it wasn't cut flowers Rosacoke had in mind. She got a dime from Papa by telling him it was about time she dropped Mama a card as to how they were getting along. She hunted up one of the Volunteers herself and bought two postal cards with the State Capitol on them. She wrote one of them to her Mama.

Dear Mama,

We like it here alot. I hope you and Baby Sister, Milo and Sissie are all o.k. When you come up here would you bring some of your altheas if they have bloomed yet.

Yours truly,

Rosacoke Mustian

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She wrote the other one to Wesley Beavers.

Dear Wesley,

How are you getting along? I am fine but miss you alot. Do you miss me? When you go to see the Florida Electric Chair think of how much I would like to be there. If you see Martha Duke Aycock tell her I said hello. I hope to see you Monday.

Your friend,

Rosacoke

She did hope the altheas had come out. Mama had got this idea out of *Life* magazine that you could force things to bloom in the winter, and she dug up a tremendous althea bush and set it in a tub and put it in the kitchen by the stove and dared it *not* to bloom. If it had bloomed, Mama would be proud to pick a handful of the oily purple flowers that bruised if you touched them and hold them in her big lap all the way to Raleigh on Sunday.

AND Sunday came before she thought it would, and there they all were in time for lunch, almost before Rosacoke had gotten Papa shaved and herself decent.

"We didn't look for you so early, Mama. Things ain't even straightened up yet. Why, I thought you had Children's Day to get behind you before you could leave."

"Well," Mama said, "I'll tell you. I didn't stay for the whole thing. Once I seen the Sunbeams through 'Come and Sing Some Happy, Happy Song,' I felt like I could leave. I did hate to miss Bracey Overby's rendering of Taps that was to conclude the Exercises, but I knew little Bracey would do all right. He'd been practising so much he was right pale, anyhow. *Then*, after leaving out of church like a Red Indian right in the middle of everything so we could get up here early, of course, some Negroes had to drive up to the house just as we was pulling off. They had this very skinny black baby with them, and they wanted your Baby Sister to blow down his throat." The Negroes were always doing that. A child who hadn't ever seen its Daddy could cure sore throat by breathing on it, they said. It *was* an awful thing, but Baby Sister enjoyed it, and you couldn't very well deny her any powers she might have, especially on Sunday. Nobody had denied Baby Sister (eight years old and getting a little big for the name) *anything* she wanted to do since she had the humiliation to be born six months to the day after her Daddy got run over. Even the hospital nurses didn't deny her—Mama dragged her in past a dozen or more signs that plainly said "No Children Under 12" and Baby Sister in Sweetheart Pink so bright you couldn't have missed her a mile off, and nobody said a word.

Right before anybody had time to wonder where they were, Milo and Sissie walked in from parking the car. Sissie looked like she had been hit, head-on, by a Mack truck. It turned out she had left home with two reasons already for being mad—she had to shell butter beans all the way up because Mama was the only woman in Warren County, you could be sure, who had frozen all her butter beans *in the shell*, and she had to sit on the back seat to do it because Mama and that Baby Sister had spoken to sit on the front, with Milo and the heater. So she sat back there shelling, and when she had finished (it took her a good hour, and they were nearly on the outskirts of Raleigh) she lowered the glass on her side, intending to empty out the hulls, and threw out the beans instead. Mama capped the climax by laughing about it, and Sissie hadn't said a word since. When she walked into Papa's room she said "Good morning," and that was the end of her for the day. It was probably a good thing because nobody could get Papa any madder than Sissie when she started running her mouth.

Mama brought three things with her—her grip to stay a few days, a suit box of lunch, and enough altheas to fit out six bushes, at least. She made it plain right away that Rosacoke would have to go on back with Milo and Sissie in the evening. Rato could stay if he wanted to and, of course, he did. Milo said he thought he would be leaving between eight and nine o'clock. What he was planning to do was to pacify Sissie by taking her

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out to eat supper at this Chinese café she liked so much and then going on to see a Sunday moving picture. But he certainly couldn't tell Mama that. It would have killed her.

ROSACOKE couldn't object to leaving. In some ways she would be glad to get home, and Milo's plans would give her time to pay her visit to Mr. Ledwell, who was sinking fast now. It would give her time to do all she wanted to do, all she thought she could do—pay her respects and give them her flowers that would say better than she could how much she felt for Mr. Ledwell, who was dying in this strange place away from his friends and his home, and for his people, who were waiting.

The day went along fine, except for Sissie, but then you never expected Sissie to act half-way decent. A few things happened and the worst one was they couldn't get Papa's room dark enough because if you could Milo said his necktie would light up and say "Kiss Me In The Dark!" He had got it that week by COD mail, and Mama said he nearly had a fit and fell in it to bring it with him so she told him he could. They all sat around with the blinds pulled like they had lost their minds, but the only thing the tie would do was shine solid green all over. Rosacoke was glad he didn't get it to working, but Papa couldn't get over the idea. He asked Milo to leave the tie over with him for a few days so he could see it good and show it around a little, but Milo was intending to wear it to some crop-dusting movies at the high school that coming Thursday.

Another thing was, after they had eaten the lunch Mama packed, Papa reached over and pulled out the playing cards. Rosacoke had taken pains to hide them way back in the drawer, but Papa pulled them out in full view and set himself up a game of Solitaire and looked over at Mama and grinned. Mama made some short remark about it appeared to her Papa was learning mighty fancy tricks in his old age. Papa asked her couldn't he teach her a few games, and she drew up in her chair like she had swallowed a ramrod and said she had gone nearly fifty years, seven of them as a deaconess in the Baptist Church, without knowing one playing card from the other, and she guessed she could go on in ignorance the rest of the time. But that wasn't the thing to stop Papa. He just stopped offering to teach her and sat there the rest of the afternoon dealing out hands of Solitaire until he was blue in the face. He played right on through the nap everybody took after lunch. You couldn't have stopped him with dynamite.

About five o'clock Milo started his plans to work by saying he and Sissie were going for a little ride, and he told Rosacoke to be ready to leave for home around nine. Whenever Milo left a place, things always quieted down. Even Baby Sister, who had pestered all afternoon to make up for Sissie going on strike, was worn out so in the quiet room Rosacoke took down her grip and packed in almost everything. She took her only clean dress, which she had washed in the hall bathtub the night before, down to the nurses' utility closet and pressed it. Everybody thought she was getting ready to go home. When she got back to the room she washed her hands and her face and stood in front of the mirror combing her hair and getting up her nerve. She turned her back to Mama and put on a little lipstick and rouge to keep from looking so pale. Then she picked up all those altheas out of the water Mama had set them in and dried off the stems with a clean towel and wrapped white tissue paper around them. Mama told her she was getting dressed too soon, and Rosacoke said, "I guess I am." But before Papa or Mama or Baby Sister had seen her good, she slipped out of the door in her yellow dress holding the flowers. She had tied a white card to them. Snowball had got it for her the day before. It said, "From a Friend Across the Hall."

IT TOOK her three steps, and she was standing in front of the oak door, twice as tall as she would ever be, that said "Ledwell." Behind it was where Mr. Ledwell was and his people, where he had laid down that

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first day Rato saw him talking and laughing, where he had gone out from to take his operation, and where it was not his home.

Rosacoke was nervous, but she kept telling herself she looked nice as she could, and she had the altheas in her hands to hide the shaking. She knocked on the door, and she must have knocked too soft because nobody came. She knocked again and listened. There were sounds behind the door, and the Ledwells might not have heard her so she pushed the door open a little, and it was dark in there. She was about to close the door and leave when she saw the yellow moving light of candles coming from a part of the room which she couldn't see into. She stepped all the way inside the room that was as dark as an open field at night with only the sky. Rosacoke couldn't see at first, but soon she could tell that there were five or six people in the room. Mr. Ledwell was a long ridge on the bed that the sheets rose and fell over in little gullies like after a rain, and his boy was standing by his head holding one of the candles. In the light of it the boy looked like Wesley Beavers couldn't look in a hundred years. The same light that fell on him fell down through a clear tent that covered his Daddy's head and chest. A little of it fell on three ladies off in a corner kneeling down right on the hard floor and on a man standing near the bed by a table with two candles on it. He was all in black, and falling down from his neck was a narrow band of purple cloth with fine gold crosses at the ends. He was talking in words that Rosacoke couldn't know, almost singing, in a low voice that was far away now because he was an old man with white hair. Finally he looked up at Mr. Ledwell's boy, and the two of them pulled the tent back off the poor man. Rosacoke knew he was alive because she could hear the air sucking into his throat, and his eyes were open on that boy and on the yellow candle.

Three times the old man in black moved his hands carefully in the air, wide and long, over Mr. Ledwell. Then he took a piece of cotton in his hand and waited for Mr. Ledwell to close his eyes. He wiped the cotton over the lids, and they were shining for a second, wet and slick, under the light before Mr. Ledwell opened them again and turned them back to his boy. The boy rolled his Daddy's head to one side and then to the other while the old man touched the cotton to the ears that looked so cold, and all the time Mr. Ledwell was trying not to take his eyes off his boy like that sad face in the soft light that came and went was all that kept him from dying. And except for that same soft light, the walls of the room would have disappeared and the ceiling, and Rosacoke could have walked out through where the walls had been. It seemed to be time for her to leave, anyway. She didn't know how long this would go on, and she didn't know what it was. She only knew they were getting Mr. Ledwell ready to die in their own way. She had taken the first step to leave when the boy's face turned up and saw her through all that dark. His face changed for a minute, and you might have thought he smiled if you hadn't known that couldn't have happened now, not on that face. That was why she didn't leave. He had looked at her like he knew why she was there, almost like he would have needed her if there had been time for need. But the old man touched Mr. Ledwell's lips, and Mr. Ledwell strained his head up off the pillow and sucked at the cotton before the old man could pull it back. He must have thought they were giving him something to drink. And it went on that way over his hands that had to be pulled out from under the cover and his feet that seemed to be tallow you could gouge a line in with your fingernail. When they finished with his head they put the tent back over him, and Rosacoke couldn't hear his breathing quite so loud. From his feet the old man walked to his head. He put a black wood cross that had Jesus, white and small, nailed on it, in Mr. Ledwell's hand. Then he shook a fine mist of water over him and made the sign again, and Rosacoke heard words she could understand. The old man told Mr. Ledwell to say "Thy will be done." Mr. Ledwell nodded his head and his eyes opened. He took his hand and tapped on the inside of the clear tent.

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When his boy looked at him, Mr. Ledwell's voice came up in pieces—but you could hear him so plain—"Don't forget to give Claude Adams one of those puppies." The boy said he wouldn't forget. Mr. Ledwell looked easier and when the old man reached under the tent to take the cross and Jesus away from him, he nodded his head, over and over, as he turned the cross loose.

The old man went over to talk to the lady who must have been Mr. Ledwell's wife. She was still on her knees, and she never took her face out of her hands. That was when Rosacoke left. They might turn on the light, and there she would be looking on at this dying which was the most private thing in the world. She stayed that long because the boy had looked at her. He might have forgotten now. He had never looked at her again.

A chair was by the door. She laid her flowers down there. In the light somebody might see them and like them and be glad that whoever it was stepped over to bring them, stepped over without saying a single word.

She waited in the hall for the sound of his dying because he was so ready, but it didn't come, and she walked back into Papa's room. Baby Sister was asleep at last in Mama's lap, and Papa's cards were still spread out on the bed, but Papa was only turning them over now, not really playing. The one light on was the one over Papa's bed, and the room was a little dark. The first thing when Rosacoke came in was that her Mama wanted to know where in the world she had been with the flowers, and Rosacoke said she had been to see a friend. Papa asked her who, and she told him, but Papa didn't remember Mr. Ledwell. He hadn't thought about Mr. Ledwell since before his operation, but just to say something he asked how the man was coming along, and all Rosacoke said was, "He ain't doing so good, Papa." And to her Mama, who had never had a secret in her life, who had never wanted a secret, she said, "Mama, please don't ask me who that is because I don't know."

It was when Rosacoke was packing the things she had left out until last that Rato walked in. Nobody had seen Rato since noon. Sunday was his big day. He walked in and said it just like he might walk in the kitchen and drop a load of wood in the box. "That man over yonder is dead. Ain't been five minutes."

Mama said she was always sorry to hear of any death, and Rato said if they would leave the door cracked open they could see the man because a nurse had already called the undertaker to come after his body. But Rosacoke said "No" and she said it so Rato wouldn't dare to open the door one inch.

Papa played with the cards on his knees but he was thinking. He was so old himself that you couldn't expect him to be too sad. Lately he always said he knew so many more dead men than he did live ones that there wasn't a soul left who could call him by his first name. And that was the truth. That was the thing that took the edge off death for Papa—grieving over so many people, so many of your friends, burying so much of your love with each one of them until you had buried all of them—everybody you had nearly—and pretty nearly all your love, and death didn't hold fear for you anymore. It wasn't like you didn't know where you were going or what it would be like when you got there. You just trusted, and you hoped for one thing, you tried to see to one last thing—for a minute he stopped his card playing, and he asked Mama could he die at home, and Mama told him he could.

That was what made Rosacoke think so long about Mr. Ledwell, who had died in that dark room. She wouldn't be able to go to his funeral, wouldn't even be asked to go. But that wasn't so bad. She had done what she could, being away from home, hadn't she, and he had died—not cut up or shot or run over—but almost in his sleep with his wife and his boy there, and with all that beautiful dying song, you knew he had died sanctified. If he had to die that was as good a way as any, leaving his living picture back here in that boy.

But then she hadn't seen him alive really.

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She hadn't ever told him—out loud—or any of his kind that she felt for them. She hadn't ever said it so loud she could hear her own voice—that Rosacoke Mustian was sorry to see it happen. That was why she said something at last. She had been quiet for so long, and now her slow lean voice cut through all the dark in the room.

"It don't seem right," Rosacoke said, "It just don't seem right. It seem like I had got to know him real well."

And her words hung in the room for a long time, longer than it took Papa to pick the cards up off the bed and lay them without a sound in the drawer, longer even than it would have taken Rosacoke to say good-bye to Wesley if it had been Saturday night and she had been at home.

Peter Levi, S.J.

For Robert Frost

And age can be a time
to make a hedge or a rhyme,
cock an eye at the morning,
for blood and heat to resign
their passionate storming.

Then let a fall of snow
mute time's overflow,
let blood's courage and heat
be chill and run slow
with an austere beat.

No passions can save
an old head from the grave:
each blood-controlling moon
that drags wave after wave
dims and hurries down.

Old age can be a time
for a garden, a rhyme,
some solitude of mind,
for the flute and the bell chime
and music of every kind.

A vain ironic mood
keeps it cleanest and good,
since only irony
can keep the truth in the blood
from a mere motion and liquidity.

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Colin MacInnes

Back Home to Mum

The Australian Myth in England

IN 1884, a century after the first convict ships set sail for infant Sydney, there was founded, in London, *The Australia and New Zealand Weekly*. This journal now has a circulation of 70,000. Who reads it? The astonishing answer is, almost all of the 60,000 permanent Australian residents in this country, plus most of the 40,000 additional transient visitors who come here every summer.

That Australia is underpopulated is a commonplace: a mere nine millions live in a continent of three million square miles. Of these, no less than a million are "New Australians," one half of them British, whom Australia, in the past ten years, has begged and bribed, almost on bended knee, to exchange the North Star for the Southern Cross. Then who are these renegades who have taken ship and plane in the reverse direction? And why have they nestled so close to the old, cold bosom of the mother country?

The attitude of Australians to England is, though much less so than of yore, still hopelessly ambivalent. There is not one Australian who but firmly believes—and will be very ready to tell you so—that any Pommie bastard* is an inferior animal to a dinkum Aussie. The war in the Pacific has destroyed forever the cherished illusion that when danger looms, immediate and effective succour will be provided by the dear old imperial Mum. Australians no longer even speak, as they used to (particularly in the sedate state of Victoria), of the British Isles as "home." And yet . . . and yet. . . .

Of the nine countries of the Commonwealth outside the British Isles, I think only Australia (and New Zealand) still regard England, in spite of everything, as, in some sense or other, the "mother country." The four Asian members obviously do not—how could they? Or how could Ghana? And does anyone think Mr. Strydom does? As for Canada, they may do round about Toronto, but do they in Quebec or in the prairie provinces? No: it is only with the Antipodes that the cord umbilical is still not entirely severed.

Thus, while few Canadians feel they *must* visit England (but, almost certainly, that they ought to see the States), an enormous number of Australians still do. To put it at its most over-simplified, they feel they must prove something to that old cow, Mum. England is ancient, dirty, class-ridden, and too small to swing a snake, the beer is like horse's urine, and you can't get a good steak tea. . . . But. . . . Well, we might as well go and take a dekko at the old place.

AND so they come: seven hundred a week by air, not to mention those whose worst fears are confirmed by the first, drab, dreadful, derelict glimpse of Tilbury docks. They save the money for the journey and, when they've spent it, get a job. But Cripes, pal, the wages here! How do these Pommies

* Pommie = Englishman; bastard = any male; almost an affectionate term.

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manage? Son, this won't do!—so they look around for something better. And they very soon find it. Has anyone ever seen one of the 60,000 labouring on a building site?

The extraordinary art Australians have for rising to the top, or very near it, when they come to England, is perhaps to be explained, among other things, by those same secret, inner feelings of diffidence towards this country that first impelled them to come over here. By Gawd, I'll show them, they resolve —and, by Gawd, they plurry well do. Let me give one small example. A gifted young merchant seaman of nineteen years, called Tommy Hicks, wanders round Soho with his pockets full of empty, singing and playing the guitar. He goes into the 2 I's coffee bar, conducted by Mr. Paul Lincoln (from Australia), where he is "discovered" by Mr. John Kennedy (from New Zealand) who becomes his business manager, and is signed on for the Harold Fielding agency by Mr. Ian Bevan (from Australia). Before he can say "Bermondsey," he is Tommy Steele, and rockets to stardom and a fortune with percentages all round. No doubt about it: the Aussies are the anglo-saxon Greeks.

In fact, the invasion of the whole English Variety world has been, in the past few years, sensational. Following in the pioneering footsteps of Miss Florrie Forde, Mr. Billy Williams ("The Man in the Velvet Suit") and the evergreen Mr. Albert Whelan (all from Melbourne, Vic.), we have witnessed the satellitic rise of Joy Nichols, Dick Bentley, Shirley Abicair, Bill Kerr, and Kitty Bluett, to name but these. Dame Nellie Melba, in the world of serious music, was even more fertile a precursor. Australians may not be able to speak, but, my goodness, they can sing: for it would appear that if you project your speaking voice out of your larynx into your nose, as Aussies do, then, when you burst into song, the effect is as melodious as it was hideous before. Or is it, more simply, the buoyant ebullience of the Australian temperament that makes its children unafraid to sing? At all events, here are Sylvia Fisher, Joan Hammond, and Elsie Morison, John Brownlee, John Cameron, and dear Peter Dawson to consolidate the conquests of Dame Nellie (or "Madame Melba," as they call her in her native land). And on the concert platform, there sit Eileen Joyce, and till recently (alas!) Noël Mewton-Wood, while Sir William McKie thunders splendidly on his organ at the Abbey.

And not only music, though in that they've made a corner, like Neapolitans. In the theatre, Robert Helpmann acts where once he danced, Peter Finch makes films between his stage successes, and Ray Lawler writes the theatrical hit of 1957. Loudon Sainthill designs the sets, and so does Sidney Nolan, when he's not engaged in painting these enormous pictures from the Australian mythology without which no cultivated, wealthy, English household is now complete. Alan Moorehead, Russell Braddon, and Paul Brickhill scoop the journalistic pool. For fear of losing the battered reader's attention, I shall not go on to list the illustrious Australians who graze triumphantly in the English fields of scholarship (bevies of professors), diplomacy, the civil service (top echelons), architecture, engineering, and medicine (quite outstandingly). And sport, of course (jockeys and speedway riders—not only cricketers and tennis players). In fact, the only two professions in which I find Australians have *not* made so decisive a mark in England, are politics and the law: and perhaps that's rather to their credit.

In the non-Marxist countries, there are only two areas of dense cultural concentration —Eastern America, and Western Europe; and those who have had the good fortune to live in either may easily forget the problem that besets artists born in a country of peripheral culture, like Ireland, say, or Australia, or Brazil. Almost inevitably, their artists must conquer a double world: the country of their own roots, and then, one or both of these two major concentrations of artistic activity. But this apparent disadvantage is a spur to greater effort: and it explains the fact that Australian artists are rarely provincial in their outlook—less so, in fact, than many an Eng-

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lishman. They simply cannot afford to be; and for linguistic and economic reasons, the first target of their endeavours outside their native land will automatically be the British Isles.

What is the reaction of the natives to the return of the descendants of Ned Kelly and the Tolpuddle Martyrs? The answer, I think, is none whatever, for the simple reason that most Englishmen simply don't realise what has hit them. They still think it's the Scots who filch the best jobs, and haven't yet rumbled the Australians. One reason for this may be that the arch-egalitarian Aussies, unlike citizens of most Commonwealth countries, accept titles; and for an Englishman, anyone with a title is an Englishman. Thus their financial affairs have been managed by such distinguished figures as Lord Bruce (chairman of the Finance Corporation for Industry), Lord Baillieu (president of the F.B.I.—English, not American, version), both from Melbourne, and Sir Leslie Boyce (Lord Mayor of London), who hales from Taree, New South Wales.

And just like the Scots—or any minority conquering the majority from within—the Aussies in England have developed a formidable clan instinct for self-help and protection, as did, in Rome, the early Christians, or, under the Germans' noses, the French *maquis*. They forgather among the damp English alien corn at the *Surrey* in the Strand (where, believe it or not, you can buy canned Melbourne beer), at the *Down-under Club* in the Fulham Road (New Zealanders admitted, rather as overseas Scots might admit the Shetland Islanders), at the *King's Head* in Earls Court (God knows why they settle in *that* area, but they do), or at the *Boulevard* coffee-shop in Wigmore Street. They have their Societies of Australian Writers—and Painters—in England, dedicated to mutual aid and succour, which were founded and energetically sponsored by that prince of High Commissioners, the late Sir Thomas White. And let a play, or book, or exhibition, or musical performance by an Australian be in the offing, then the bush telegraph beats out its compulsive summons to a massive corroboree of the Antipodean tribes, and the colony advance on a purposeful walkabout in the direction of the theatre, gallery, concert hall, or literary party.

BUT if the British are unaware of the fifth column in their midst, they are certainly more conscious than they used to be of Australia itself. I painfully recall, in the 1930's, when for a few intoxicating years I held an Australian passport, the languid disdain with which the Englishman regarded the distant continent. Donald Bradman was the only Australian they'd ever heard of... and wasn't he—excuse me, my dear chap—something of a—well—I mean, he liked *winning* when he played. And that *accent*, they said. That *Cockney* accent (which it isn't). No no, dear boy, no, no ... no.

My oath, all that's altered now.... There exists a mysterious law, which someone should investigate one day, whereby countries, hitherto neglected and despised, become suddenly *fashionable*. Of recent years, for instance, just as Mexico was in the 1920's, so have Brazil and the Belgian Congo and Australia become modish in this sense, have suddenly become countries people are curious about, and want to be able to say they've been to. I think the last war began the cult of things Australian. There was a moment when Bob Menzies seemed the only Commonwealth statesman to compare with Winston Churchill. The diggers in Egypt and Malaya grew more flowers—if this were possible—on the laurels they'd won earlier at Gallipoli. And in the Pacific, Australia became, for a few years, the centre of the free world.... When the struggle was over, and we had those idiotic ration books, they deluged us with private and collective bounty. Then the half million young Britons set off to the promised land, and Australia became, almost overnight, a place desirable....

But perhaps, all unconsciously, it is the work of the expatriate artists which is also stoking the growing admiration for Australia. Since England heard Ray Lawler's *The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, and saw the obsessive legends of Mrs. Fraser and Edward

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Kelly portrayed by Sidney Nolan, it can no longer think of Australia as a country without its myths and mysteries. One sees thus that the Australians, like the Irish, can best create their national mythology abroad. The Irish dream was woven in London, in Paris, in Trieste, and in New York. Australians at home would never have believed in Roo and Ned, their symbolic heroes, until Lawler and Nolan had first persuaded old Mother England they were heroes too.

And so one also sees that grass-root Australian artists, who dig their toes firmly into the native mud, and dub the adventurous wanderers "expatriates" as if this were a nasty word, may have failed to realise altogether how and where the Australian legends can be born.

AND what will these legends be?

In the first place, it is clear that, for creating them, Australian artists find themselves in an enviable tactical position: for their golden age, the age of the pioneers and virgin lands, is so very close to them in time. We, by comparison, are in a hopeless case, since our age of innocence is so remote, and any legends we may try to delve out of the past are merely "artistic" and archaic in the dread pre-Raphaelite manner; or else, if of contemporary figures, mannerist and unconvincing, as in the unfortunate example of T. E. Lawrence. Notice how the Americans, too, hit the target almost infallibly when they return to their own fairly recent wild west era, but quite fail to persuade us with Audie Murphy, let alone James Dean. It seems that the perfect period for the creation of a myth is when the first centenary of the heroes has not been celebrated yet: when the artists, as children, could speak to old men who, as young men, had seen the golden heroes in their living flesh.

And who will the heroes be?

We can find most of them in the pantheon with which Sidney Nolan has already made us so familiar. Edward "Ned" Kelly, who, as a boy of twenty-three, fought the whole government of the colony of Victoria with all the "wild colonial boys" solidly behind him. The explorers who, almost within living memory, set off by camel or on foot across the second largest desert in the world. The men of the Eureka Stockade, whose rebel "flag of stars" is now consecrated in the national flag. The 150,000 men and women who were transported to keep the Old Country respectable. And, in more recent times, the airmen who really made the continent a nation, flying solo in crazy biplanes over shark-laden seas and hundreds of absolutely void square miles. And perhaps, one day, some Australian artist will even find, among the most wronged human creatures in the world—the authentic Old Australians—a hero of the stone-age who will shame our arrogance, and teach us ancient wisdoms.

The décor will be the wastes, the Bush, and the encircling seas, with drought and fire and perpetually burning sun. And the heroes' companions, the birds and beasts and reptiles and sea creatures—brolga, wombat, goanna, dugong—whose names betray the strangeness of their natures. And in these heroes, the complex, contradictory Australian character will be written large: the fanatical individualists who mistrust originality outside the herd; the beery boozer wedded to the censorious wowser; the men who are cruel, incurious, vain, and flinty-hearted, brave, open-handed, humorous, and adventurous—born barrack-room lawyers with a profound contempt for fuss.

And why should it matter that Australian artists should create mythological heroes?

In the answer lies the final, the absolute triumph of the artist over those *practical* men who deride his activities as marginal. Without myths—without the symbols that enshrine its own highest conception of itself—no people can begin to exist at all. The myths once invented, they form, in turn, a people in their image—practical men and all. The artists create the myths, born of infant memories of outback heroes, but perhaps taking shape, over a pint of Carlton and United, in an English saloon bar beside the river Thames.

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LETTER FROM MOSCOW

A Visit to Pasternak

IT WAS my first impression of Boris Pasternak, and I shall never forget it: a tall, grey-haired man stood at the open door of the house and waved me to come in, come in. He gesticulated with both hands and smiled at me as I walked up the snowy path through his garden. I do not know what kind of reception I had expected from him. But it is true I had not expected to find him at the front door, waving and smiling at me. I had thought to find an air of prudence, of reserve and distrust, and that indeed is what in some degree I did meet when talking to Pasternak's wife or his friends. But in the poet himself I found one of the freest human beings I have ever known, using the word not to denote external freedom but as the attribute of someone sovereign, confident, open, and true. In Boris Pasternak, for the first time, I met the other Russia—a country whose dimensions we do not know, more difficult of access than the Soviet Union itself.

Boris Pasternak, now sixty-seven years old, studied in Marburg and speaks German, English, and French fluently. (His father left Russia in 1921 and lived in Germany until Hitler came to power; he died as an emigré in England, where one of Pasternak's sisters lives, married to an Oxford professor of psychiatry.) In his little timber country cottage near Moscow, where I was visiting him, the poet is linked with the culture of the whole world. There is nothing provincial about him, and one does not get any impression of prolonged isolation.

Peredelkino, forty minutes' journey from Moscow, is a small village surrounded by hills and pine-woods where in the 'thirties the Soviet Writers' Union established a writers' colony of two-storeyed wooden houses, very much alike externally, set in large gardens. Of them all, Pasternak's house is perhaps the most simply equipped. It is quite unpretentiously furnished with the few pieces required for a house in the country. He has an apartment in town, but lives as much as possible in his *dacha*. I came from the keen winter cold into a warm kitchen. Pasternak shook both my hands while I introduced myself in Russian. He smiled and said, "So you're a correspondent from West Germany?" He looked at me again and added in German, *"So jung und schon so verdorben!"* The joke seemed to please him; he repeated it later to his friends, and addressed me as "our friend, so young and so decadent" when, with a glass of vodka in his hand, he called a toast.

After this warm greeting, which lasted several minutes, I found myself upstairs in the poet's study. His wife, dark, plump, and inconspicuous, had led us into an almost empty room with large windows. There was a writing-table, a large wardrobe of light-coloured wood, a couple of chests and wooden chairs, a high desk and a dark, narrow bookcase. It contained a large Russian-English dictionary and a big Russian Bible; there were practically all Kafka's writings, in German, and Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, in French. "I haven't read Kafka yet, I've only just got him," Boris Pasternak said. "I'm just reading Marcel Proust. Very beautiful, at times very, very beautiful, but there's something missing in it. Well, we'll talk about that later."

And almost without transition he began an agitated monologue. It was the attempt of a poet to describe himself, to define his work. The names of Rilke, Thomas Mann, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, rose and disappeared in a whirlpool of comparisons. "The powers of Thomas Mann and Rilke combined in one person—that would produce a work of art," he said. In Thomas Mann there was too much the sense of an experimental psychological clinic, and he wrote too many essays for literary periodicals. But his art, combined with the delicacy and depth, the sense of the transcendent in Rilke's *Malte Laurids Brigge*—that would be something. And what a novel *Ulysses* would have been if it had retained the clarity of *Dubliners*! He himself was a modern, said Boris Pasternak, looking apologetically at the high desk which seemed to recall Goethe, but which he had only acquired recently

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because it was painful to sit at the writing-table. He had to use the world of to-day in his work.

And suddenly we reached the subject about which I really wanted to question him, his novel, *Dr. Zhivago*, recently published in Italy but prohibited by the censorship in Russia. Pasternak, whose lyrics had made him famous, told me how his poems built themselves up, image upon image, impression upon impression; not without effort, it is true, but still with a certain inevitability. After the war he found that he had a name, and it was a name that was also known abroad. Suddenly he sprang from his chair and stood upright, tall, with his narrow, deeply-cut face, his arms hanging straight down. "So then I said to myself, you must stand up straight before your own name. It seemed to me that I first had to earn the name I had won, not by poetry, but by prose, by something that might well cost more labour, more effort, more time, and whatever else."

He was more than sixty, Pasternak said, an old man who had lived through anxious and stirring times. He had the duty to bear witness —the witness of an artist, not a politician. A work of art could not be all on one plane; it had to speak on different levels. In a novel, and in his novel too, the figures of truth and falsehood must have their say. "You have the right," he continued, "to ask me whether I believe what I have written. My answer is yes. I have borne witness as an artist; I have written about the times I lived through." *Dr. Zhivago*, he said, was not an autobiograpical book, but it moved in a milieu that he knew well, the world of his friends, professors, writers, actors, artists. Again and again he spoke, impressively and with immense seriousness, of the sense of obligation to bear witness, to provide a document of the age.

We talked about his work on the book; it had helped him to surmount an inner crisis. He did not say what kind of crisis it was; perhaps it was the crisis of a lyrical poet who was writing his verse in the "internal emigration," without any possibility of having it published, who was earning his living, and a good living too, by translating the great European classics, and who yet felt that he had to give testimony about the times he was living in and the life he had lived, testimony in the compact form of great prose. He had begun work on the novel before Stalin's death, and he had finished it at the end of 1955. It was then sent to several Moscow publishing houses, and to the editors of some periodicals. At the time Boris Pasternak was quite certain that the book would be published, and so a copy was sent to the Italian publisher Feltrinelli, who has now published the Italian translation in Milan. At that time a young editor, a Communist, as Pasternak expressly emphasised, was enthusiastic about the book. He wanted it to be shortened to make it suitable for publication in the Soviet Union, and Pasternak agreed. He pointed to a series of sketches on the wall above his desk—they were the originals of the first illustrations for Tolstoy's *Resurrection*. Pasternak's father had done them. When Tolstoy's work first appeared, it too could be published only in the abridged version permitted by the censorship. The complete work, with all the illustrations and the entire text, appeared only in the foreign editions. The English missionary distributing Bibles, the drawing of the "feet in chains"—these and other illustrations did not pass the Tsarist censor. The first Russian edition was substantially cut, and still it was a great book, Pasternak said.

Boris Pasternak is aware of what country he is living in, and he had raised no objection to the abridgment of his novel. It was true, he said, that he was not one of those authors who are busy day and night rewriting their own books, but he was then certain that an abridged edition would be published in the Soviet Union. However, the book stayed with the publishers. Everyone put the responsibility for decision on someone higher up, and in the end there was no one who felt his position strong enough to approve publication of the novel. The Milan publisher was then asked to postpone publication of the Italian edition, and Feltrinelli had agreed to a delay of six months. At the time Pasternak himself was in hospital, in the Kremlin clinic reserved for particularly eminent people in the Soviet Union. Time passed, and still there was no decision about a Soviet publisher. At last Pasternak was visited in the hospital, and asked in a friendly way to request Feltrinelli to return the manuscript for correction. Pasternak had little hope of the response to such a telegram, but he sent it. The telegram was followed by official intervention in Milan, but Pasternak did not speak about that. I got the impression that he too believed that there would not have been such a sensation about his novel if it had first appeared in abridged form in the Soviet Union. "I deplore the fuss now being made about my book," he said. "Everybody's writing about it, but who in fact has read it? What do they quote from it? Always the same passages—three pages, perhaps, out of a book of 700 pages." He looked searchingly at me. Had I read it? I had not read it, first because I do not read Italian, and secondly because there is not, I believe, a single copy of the Italian edition in the whole of Moscow. Boris Pasternak, at any rate, has not yet seen his novel in published form.

He does not disavow anything he has written;

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he does not want to delete a single sentence; but he does object to the book's being treated as a political pamphlet, as an indictment of Soviet society. Not long ago, he said, some Communist journalists had called on him; they spoke only of the sensation the book had caused, not of the book itself. When Boris Pasternak says that his book is not the work of a political man, he speaks in all sincerity. He is not one to engage in ideological disputes. That is not the object of his novel. To be sure, he is no Communist; he does not believe in dialectical materialism. He calls himself "almost an atheist," and then explains, with deep emotion, his concept of God. He sees the centuries as rungs in God's ladder.

Now and again in a man's life, Pasternak said, perhaps three times, certainly never more than ten, he has a profound and unmistakable sense of the divine presence—perhaps in the love of a work of art, or in love of one's country, or in love of a woman. Again he fell back on Thomas Mann to explain what he meant, because in the final analysis Mann's work lacked that divine spark, that link with the transcendental. Pasternak talked about Goethe's *Faust*, which he had translated into Russian, referring to passages in the first and second parts where the poetry was so overwhelming that the reader almost lost consciousness for minutes on end, although afterwards, however carefully he re-read the lines, he was unable to say what it was in them that was so shattering and so enchanting.... No, Pasternak is not the man to have written an ideological pamphlet. He feels the compulsion to bear witness to the life of his times, to the epoch in which he has lived and which he now believes is at an end. The time of revolution is past, he says. "The proclamations, the tumult, the excitement, are over. Now something else is growing, something new. It is growing imperceptibly and quietly, as the grass grows. It is growing as fruit does, and it is growing in the young. The essential thing in this epoch is that a new freedom is being born." These words echo the last sentence of his novel, the hopeful, optimistic words exchanged between the two friends of the dead Dr. Zhivago.

For Pasternak is not an embittered man. He is an optimist, deeply religious, who believes in life and in the superiority of life to any theory or dogma. A little later, in the dining-room downstairs, he waved his glass of vodka again and again over the richly-spread table, each time standing up for a new toast. Laughing and gesturing, he threw new ideas into the talk. Some Russian friends had arrived, two young scientists and their wives. Both young men were as widely educated as any I have ever seen. In conversation they quoted Shakespeare and Aeschylus, St. Augustine and Kafka; they had read Proust in French and Hemingway in English. Pasternak shook his head vigorously when we stood up to go. No, we were not disturbing him at all, and there was enough food for everybody. "Take the beaver, for example. The beaver has to build a dam, no matter where it is. You can lock a beaver up in your bedroom, and it will at once start on a dam. It's the same with my wife. Every Sunday she cooks an enormous meal, whether we're expecting friends or not. And then I have to sit down at the telephone and call people up to come and help us eat it." His wife was staring distractedly at her plate.

He told us that in the morning he had met a woman who knew Rilke well in the years 1918–1921. He was angry about the unjust and nasty criticism of Rilke's work that he had read in an East German newspaper. He had not a good word to say for the Rilke cult, but still Rilke could not be treated in this fashion. He spoke of Goethe and Shakespeare as though they were his contemporaries, and spoke about them in their own languages. He also told us that Bertolt Brecht had asked him to put into Russian the speech of thanks he made when he came to Moscow to receive his Stalin prize. He had done so without pleasure, and without pleasure had read the volume of Brecht's poetry which the German dramatist had in gratitude sent him.

He had little affinity with poets who were above all else poetical. It was only when Helena Weigel brought her theatre troupe to Moscow that he realised that he had translated the speech of a great poet and that, because of the selection made in a poetry anthology published in East Germany, he had nearly missed knowing the work of a great poet. Then he stood up again, to call for a new toast, a patriotic toast, remarking as a preliminary that he wanted to talk about the work of literary education now being done in the Soviet Union. It was an important work. He himself had been an esoteric poet lost in fantasies and impressions, and he was grateful for this literary education. "I have not become a socialist realist," he said. "No, I'm no socialist realist. But I have become a realist, and for that I am grateful." And there was something else to which he wanted to drink, in all sincerity: He was grateful to his age and to his country, for his work and his strength had been shaped by them.

He is a singular man, this Boris Pasternak. As a poet he is almost unknown in his own country, except to a relatively small circle.

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He calls himself a realist, but only in the sense in which all great poets, who wish to grasp the world as a whole, are realists. For most of the young people now being turned out by the Soviet educational system, his poems are virtually incomprehensible. They are products of a dark and subterranean power, full of symbols and word clusters and vivid and disturbing images. His poems have created for him a community of friends about which the official literary criticism of the Soviet Union says that it lives in the ivory tower of the "internal emigration." The novel *Dr. Zhivago* was designed to transcend the limits of this circle. It was intended to be a universally valid document of an age, simple in its language, an unpretentious, straightforward, easily comprehensible testimony. But now it turns out that this book has not been published in Pasternak's own country. For most Russian readers of the present day he remains only the man whose splendid translations of the European classics have given the Russian people new insight into Goethe, Schiller, and Shakespeare.

This man lives in Peredelkino, in a spiritual world which embraces everything that can be called Western civilisation. This is the world in which he lives, the enclave of freedom that he has carved for himself. It is a world in which no ideological positions are manned. He has said himself that he is not a social realist. He is not a Marxist, nor a Communist. But which party, after all, could claim as one of its members a man who regards the Russian revolution and the developments determined by it as merely a transitional phase of world history, as a prelude to the birth of something new? Boris Pasternak and his friends are perhaps living in one of those oases in which European civilisation is maintaining itself in these turbulent times—in one of those oases that Arthur Koestler demanded in the presence of the cultural collapse which the mass age brings with it. If his attitude towards his environment, towards the goals of the society in which he is living, appears to be strangely ambiguous, this is due not only to the difficult position in which such a man is bound to find himself in such a state. It is due to the fact that this tremendously vital and optimistic poet refuses, because of his profound faith in the life force, to take a position of hostility towards the world around him. This is evident, too, in his answer to the question as to what he meant when he said that the Russian Revolution was over and had attained its goal. He said, "Let me give a poetic answer. But do not think that it is mere confused mumbling. My Russian friends here can contradict me if they think so. What I want to say to you is this: Russians have a different attitude to property and possessions. Russians regard themselves as being mere guests in this life. I suppose the truth is that we Russians are more philosophical than the West."

The man who speaks thus is not speaking for himself alone; he speaks for that other Russia which the world used to love in the classics of Russian literature, for that Russia which is now concealed from us behind a gigantic façade of technical achievements and behind a curtain of ideological quarrels, a Russia full of magnificent human strength, of a magnificent and tragic capacity for suffering. Who knows how numerous this other Russia is? Who knows how many people belong to circles such as the one that Pasternak has formed around him? They are not groups of resistance against the state—such an idea would be false and off the track. They consist of men who without any doubt perform their duties towards the state—some by translation, some by scientific research. At the same time, they are men who have preserved their personality and their integrity intact, who say nothing that they do not believe—even if sometimes they do not say everything that they do believe. During Stalin's lifetime Boris Pasternak did not contribute a single poem towards the glorification of the cult of personality. And he accepted even the calculated risk of submitting his novel *Dr. Zhivago* for examination to the State Publishing House only when the time appeared ripe for him. Perhaps this was a mistake and the time was not yet ripe, but Boris Pasternak will live on, and his friends live on, as guardians of that magnificent humanity that we know from Russian history. They live in that still centre which is found in the eye of every hurricane.

Gerd Ruge

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I. A. Richards Yin and Yang

The poem expands as the philosophy did which failed to instruct Alexander. It quotes Werner Jaeger, The Gospel and Engels, looks to the satisfaction of all desires which know what they want and returns to the night waiting for a dawn, "In Heaven and Hell unmated," which then comes to renew the unending cycle.

A stirring year, a brooding year; and what's to be the name?
The son of hope and fear and daring came.
Cry woe, o would . . . o why?

Designed the Soul and built the Word, invented *have* and *can*,
Laying out City and Self on the one enfolding plan:
"The great invention of the Greek was Man."
Cry woe, o would . . . o why?

To him that hath must be given; but what must be taken away?
And how can power serve those who will only pray?
To each according to his need . . . . were you due to say?
Cry woe, o would . . . o why?

May peace and plenty and order and health and justice unending,
Truth like the stream laid on, knowledge for ever expanding,
Limitless shelves brimming with understanding
Cry woe, o would . . . o why?

At the fullness of Time (*Cross fingers? Cross thumbs at the door.*)
The Self itself exhaust. No more. Or
Restore the original thirst, open the void at the core.

O

O is for open. What's open for this thirst?
What come closer than the best and the worst?
Were these two not co-mingled from the first?
Cross fingers? Cross thumbs at the door.

The good luck fountain in the glassy sea,
Faith posturing to incredulity,
Little Jack Horner in the Sacristy.
Cross fingers? Cross thumbs at the door.

Not forget: rack and faggot stem from the cell
And highest he who unattaining fell;
Heaven's figments are ground out in Hell.
Cross fingers? Cross thumbs at the door.

On, on out to the pre-dawn and the reborn air
Where Spring (*O would . . .*) comes to the heart grown bare
Wakes it, washes it, makes it ready, if it dare.
Cross fingers and thumbs at the door.

Full again, though, of—we may not know what
Our lot: who drank too deep of Lethe and forgot.

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Once Upon a Time . . . . (I)

A Look Back at British Socialism 1922–1937

A. J. P. Taylor

THE General Election of November 1922 opened the Baldwin era, though Bonar Law was in nominal control for the first few months. "Tranquillity and freedom from adventures and commitments" was the cry which put the second-class brains into power. On the Left there was a different spirit. Walton Newbold, returned as a Communist at Motherwell, wired to Lenin: "Glasgow won for Communism." It seemed a pardonable exaggeration. In Glasgow itself the Clydesiders of the I.L.P. won ten out of fifteen seats and scented social revolution just round the corner. David Kirkwood shouted from his railway-carriage to the crowd which sped the departure of the Clydesiders to Westminster: "When we come back, this station, this railway, will belong to the people!" The promise was to be fulfilled, though only after a longer delay than Kirkwood or the crowd foresaw. Still less did they foresee Kirkwood as a member of the House of Lords; one of his associates, Minister of Defence authorising the secret manufacture of atom bombs; and Maxton, supposed Robespierre of the group, the most loved and least effective member of the House of Commons. What did the Clydesiders achieve in practice? Only to make Ramsay MacDonald leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party by 61 votes to 56.

Ramsay MacDonald was to prove the Left-wing counterpart of Baldwin, equally devoted to tranquillity and freedom from adventures and commitments. In 1922 he still seemed securely on the Left, still lunching every day at the 1917 Club; still frowned on by the respectable for his supposed pacifism during the Great War. In presence he was, in Shinwell's phrase, a prince among men. He had a ravishingly musical voice, every syllable ringing of Utopia. His ideas of social improvement were vague and undefined. In foreign affairs he saw clearly and wished, in true Left-wing fashion, to substitute conciliation and appeasement for alliances and the balance of power. He and Arthur Henderson were the principal targets for the abuse which flowed from Moscow. They were Social Traitors, Social Fascists; and indeed the two men did more than any others to keep the British Labour movement free from Communism—a service for which they deserve to be remembered.

The British Labour Party, now the official Opposition, and soon to form the first Labour Government, was a strange alliance of two distinct forces. On the one hand the Trade Union movement supplied the firm foundation and most of the money. Here the driving force was straight economic discontent. The post-war boom was over; large-scale unemployment had come to stay. The Red Flag flew on the Clyde, in Poplar, in South Wales. Here the King's writ did not run; and the Left supposed that they had only to capture central administration as they had already in these areas taken over local government. Policy and long-term planning seemed unnecessary. Capitalism would topple of its own defects; and the social revolution would come

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peacefully by a simple process of administrative change. The British Left believed as confidently as Lenin had done in November 1917 that Socialism could be made in twenty-four hours. Socialism was preached in moral terms: men had to be persuaded that it was right and just. The only problem was to win a majority; then Socialism would follow of its own accord. The Labour movement had only to squeeze up wages and welfare until capitalism exploded, and the trick would be turned. Hence while the Left argued it did not lead. Economic conditions, not leadership, would produce the desired result.

The other side of the Labour Party was the section of the individual members, organised in the constituency parties. Henderson had created this new system in 1918—a creation which changed the face of British politics. Previously individuals could join the Labour Party only through the I.L.P. or lesser bodies like the S.D.F. and the Fabian Society. Now these bodies were doomed as mass-organisations though the I.L.P. went on pontificating, with declining membership, until the end of the decade. Moreover, by this device the Labour Party could offer a home to Radicals who had formerly been Liberal. Home Rule and sectarian disputes over education—the two issues which had sustained the Liberal party—were dead or dying. The great emotional question for the middle-class Left was foreign policy; and here the Labour Party had a less-spotted record. MacDonald had opposed the war from the first hour; and the Labour Party had denounced the treaty of Versailles six weeks before it was signed. Also, though Labour would have nothing to do with the Communist Party, it wished to end the boycott of Soviet Russia. The Councils of Action which had prevented war against Russia in 1920 were a proud memory; the mirage of Russian trade promised a solution for British economic difficulties; and, though most men of the Left knew little of conditions in Russia, they rejoiced at the social revolution there and believed that the dictatorship would lose its force when other countries held out the hand of friendship. Left policy had a simple prescription. Germany and Russia were justly aggrieved; and the redress of their grievances would secure the peace and prosperity of the world.

The cleavage between the two sections of the Left was not absolute. Most Trade Union leaders—and their more active followers—had started as Socialist intellectuals of a working-class sort; some indeed were Communists, though without understanding what this implied. Many of the "politicians" had started in the Trade Union movement; and the others recognised an obligation to promote economic improvement. Rather than a cleavage, there was a division of function. The Trade Unions expected that an enlightened foreign policy would give economic benefits; and the politicians preached welfare in order to have a free hand for their foreign policy. They were held together by a common morality: a passionate rejection of social evils, and a conviction that these evils could be ended by the overthrow of the existing order. The Left was revolutionary in outlook, though not in method. The Baldwin era gradually forced the conclusion that it must become either both or neither.

THE promised land was not long delayed. Baldwin was no sooner in power than he went again to the polls on the question of Protection. The Labour Party won thirty-nine seats; the Conservatives lost nearly a hundred; and when Parliament met Baldwin was defeated by the combined Liberal and Labour votes. Ramsay MacDonald became Prime Minister, first being sworn of the Privy Council—the only Prime Minister to need this preliminary. It was a revolutionary symbol, but the only one. Labour's success was not due to Socialism. It was the last victory of Free Trade—a respectable, and by now an antiquated, cause. In theory Labour stood for the community against private interests. In practice it defended balanced budgets, sound money, and free trade. Planning and a directed economy were preached by Amery and a few enlightened Conservatives so far as they were preached at all. The first Labour Government took office with minority support. Hence it could plead exemption from

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any startling act of legislation. It was supposed to show that Labour was fit to govern. Oddly, no one observed that this had already been demonstrated: Henderson had been a member of the War Cabinet, and Clynes a successful Minister of Food. Nor was the Labour Government remarkable as a showpiece. Most ministers became obstinate defenders of their departments, only Wheatley —a Catholic business-man from Glasgow— taking an initiative. A smug phrase cloaked the lack of thought or policy: Labour was "in office but not in power."

MacDonald was indifferent to the domestic record of his government. Foreign affairs were what mattered to him. He began the appeasement of Germany and opened the road to Locarno, which the Conservatives followed later to general surprise. Indeed after 1924 there was no Right foreign policy: MacDonald's spirit prevailed in regard to Germany whether he was in office or not. Russia was a different matter. MacDonald had never shared the Left enthusiasm for the Bolshevik revolution and now recognised the Soviet government as grudgingly as he could. The Left wanted a union of hearts and also a trade treaty opening the Russian market to British goods. Negotiations lagged, then jammed. Ponsonby, MacDonald's undersecretary, actually announced breakdown early in August. A group of Left M.P.s took up the running and imposed agreement—the first of many Left revolts against the official leadership, and for once successful. MacDonald and the Left were brought back to harmony by a series of unexpected twists. The Attorney-General—ill-briefed in the niceties of Left politics—started to prosecute a Communist editor for appealing to soldiers not to act as strike-breakers; then withdrew when Labour M.P.s protested. The Liberal and Conservative parties were indignant or claimed to be. The government was defeated in the House of Commons; and MacDonald found himself fighting a General Election as the patron of sedition.

The affair of the Zinoviev letter completed the reconciliation. It is a matter of little historical importance whether the letter was genuine or not. Labour men were unanimous that it was a fraud, manufactured by the anti-Bolshevik centre at Riga or perhaps by the Foreign Office itself. This was far from the "fair play" which George V had desired for the Labour Government. It was the gentlemen of England playing dirty as only they knew how to do. MacDonald had half-imagined himself as national leader, transcending party. Now he was back on the Left, again the ostracised idealist of the war years. The Zinoviev letter lost the General Election for Labour, or so it was said. But it also gave Labour a cover against accusations of failure. They had been tricked out of office, not defeated or discredited. Few bothered to analyse the government's record; and the legend soon became established that everything had been going splendidly until Campbell and Zinoviev cropped up. There was little in the way of new thought or new policy. Ernest Bevin, with the constructive spirit which he was later to show as Foreign Secretary, proposed that Labour should not again take office with a minority; from this to continuity of policy even with a majority was not a far step. The I.L.P., now at its last kick of life, proposed to arrive at Socialism by means of The Living Wage. This was none other than our old friend that capitalism would burst of itself if wage demands were pushed high enough.

ACTION, not thought, gave the Left its only outlet in these years. The General Strike was the most class-conscious act in British history (or rather the most working-class conscious act—the upper classes never lose consciousness). Also, though no one cares about this, it was one of the few unselfish acts in anybody's history. But it did not fit into any pattern of Left development. There was no deliberate oscillation from political to industrial action, as some ingenious writers have suggested. The miners had been plodding steadily on with their struggle since Lloyd George swindled them over the Sankey Commission in 1919. This struggle happened to reach a climax in 1926. It had little to do with Left or Right, but was in truth a struggle for existence. Trade Union-

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ists did not need to be Communists, syndicalists, or even Socialists, to sympathise with the miners; they only needed to sympathise, and in Trade Union terms that could only take one form—the sympathetic strike. Certainly the avowed Left sympathised also and supported the strike as best they could. But what was there for a Left intellectual, or even for a Trade Union official to do? Speeches appealing for solidarity were agreeable to deliver, but pointless when the audience was solid already. Nor was there anything to organise. The General Council met only four times during the ten days of the strike; and the *British Worker* was hard-pressed for news. "Spirit splendid; all out" became monotonous. Some intellectuals who could drive motor-cars acted as couriers, carrying T.U.C. secret instructions which contained no secrets. Many intellectuals could not even drive. W. H. Auden, moving a car four miles during the ten days (from Old Marston to Oxford) was a symbol of Faith, not Works.

Things would have been different if the T.U.C. had taken over the running of the country, but no one proposed this seriously. In fact, like most gestures of sympathy, once made it had served its purpose; and the only concern of those who had made it was to bring it to an end. The petering-out of the strike, and still more the defeat of the miners, certainly weakened the Trade Union movement. It had no effect on Left-wing thought. The General Strike had been an instinctive reaction, not a policy. Once over, it was forgotten except for the resentment which Baldwin gratuitously provoked by legislating against the Trade Unions in 1927. This was always his way: soft words, harsh acts. The miners had experienced it previously; Edward VIII was to experience it later. Even so, there was a short period of relative tranquillity and recovery—the true "age of Baldwin"—which lasted until 1929. No great strikes; no riots by the unemployed; no alarms of war. The Labour Party, securely established as the official opposition, waited confidently for the swing of the pendulum. They would come into office on the great British principle of Buggins's turn. The Left became frivolous: gay young things of intellectualism. Enthusiastic tourists visited Soviet Russia, not to see new factories or the triumph of the social revolution, but to admire co-educational schools, divorce by consent, and prisons allegedly without bars. Young writers found their spiritual home in Berlin and rejoiced at the moral emancipation shown by the homosexual prostitutes on the Kurfürstendamm. Hock became a Left-wing drink; claret as shockingly Tory as it had been in the 18th century.

THE General Election of 1929 whispered the last enchantment of the Victorian age. Baldwin campaigned to the cry: Safety First. The Labour Party advocated a nebulous Socialism in moral terms coined by F. D. Maurice and Ruskin. The result was perverse. Labour got fewer votes, more seats, than the Conservatives; not however enough to escape another run of being "in office, but not in power." There was a victory celebration at the Albert Hall, Fenner Brockway registering triumph with outstretched arm in a salute not yet branded as "Fascist" and Ramsay MacDonald appearing in white tie and tails to announce that he was on his way to Buckingham Palace. Thereafter: nothing. The Labour Government had no programme except to be indistinguishable from its predecessor. In MacDonald's words, there was to be no monkeying. Unfortunately events disregarded his instruction. In October, 1929, the great economic storm began to blow. Unemployment passed two million, soared to three. The gold standard rocked. The Labour Party had no remedy for this situation. Planned economy was no part of classical Socialism. Marx, for instance, assumed that supply and demand, the law of the market, would continue to work under Socialism; only private profit would be eliminated. Soviet Russia had been operating a market economy and a gold currency since the end of the Civil War. The first Five Year Plan, launched in 1928, had not yet made an impact on Western minds. The New Deal had not appeared on the horizon. Keynesian economics were still in conception. Only

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Fascist Italy claimed, however falsely, to have a planned economy.

The Labour Government could therefore only offer the classical remedy of balanced budgets and economy cuts. A few Socialists, Lansbury in chief, wished to shelter the poor from the storm, and hang the expense. Mosley alone advocated this with unconscious Keynesianism. His policy was rejected, and he left the Labour Party with some Left-wing associates to form the "New Party." Later he took the full road to Fascism, and most of his associates drifted back to Labour, bringing economic direction with them in their baggage. But in August, 1931, when the crisis reached its height, the Labour Government was still unshakably orthodox in its economic thinking. Eleven members of the Cabinet agreed to reduce the unemployment benefit by ten per cent; ten refused. (Attlee, with his usual luck, was not in the Cabinet and so did not have to commit himself one way or the other.) The Labour Government broke up. MacDonald went off happily, with Snowden and Thomas, to form a National Government, which should save the pound—an ambition which fortunately it did not accomplish. Labour was massacred at the ensuing General Election, and for an obvious reason. The National Government claimed to have a remedy, though it had in fact the wrong one. Labour did not even make the claim. Apart from the defence of the unemployment benefit, its election campaign was fought solely on the ticket of Free Trade.

Yet, because of the way it had left office, Labour could again overlook its own faults and blame the manœuvres or treachery of others. MacDonald, Baldwin, or George V had tricked the simple, high-minded members of the Labour Party. Arthur Greenwood, wearily fighting his election campaign in Lancashire, reiterated at every stop: "It's not fair," as though the Socialist movement had a heaven-sent right to sunshine. After defeat, the Left displayed old grievances, not new thought. The conclusion which Laski, principal theorist of the party, drew from the affair was that the monarchy should be abolished. Yet Weimar Germany and the United States had the same economic difficulties and even dirtier politics. Still, some thought stirred as the dust subsided. John Strachey, breaking loose from Mosley, returned to Socialism with the only Marxist classic written in English, *The Coming Struggle for Power*. Yet he and other new thinkers of the Left squinted oddly. Mesmerised by Russia's Five Year Plans, they ignored the renewed terror and the massacre of the kulaks with which these were accompanied. Moreover, they knew nothing of America. They closed their eyes to the New Deal and described America right up to 1939 as a "Fascist economy." Soviet Russia was again the Utopia of the Left, now on grounds of economic efficiency, not of moral superiority. Russia was not merely the Workers' State. It was the model of planned economy.

THE Left became more markedly intellectual as the decade progressed, or perhaps intellectuals became more markedly Left. The Oxford Union had its only Communist president, Philip Toynbee. The October Club, avowedly pro-Communist, was for some years the largest political club in Oxford. Working-men tried to find instructions for their Trade Union meetings in the poems of Auden and Spender. In this hub-bub, the Left Book Club stood supreme. Each month it distributed two books as the "Choice"—chosen of course not by the readers, but by a triumvirate of intellectual dictators, much as Lord Woolton decided later, though with more excuse, on the correct supply of vitamins and calories. Strachey, Laski, and Gollancz provided a balanced intellectual diet, parcelling out near-Communism, proletarian "literature," and sheer crankiness. Of the two first "choices," for instance, one by a biologist (still turning the old hurdy-gurdy in 1958) looked forward to the time when artificial insemination would enable a Lenin (or a Stalin?) to father every child in the Soviet Union. The Left Book Club was often regarded as a subversive organisation. In reality it was a safety-valve. Reading is a substitute for action, not a prelude to it; and the members of the Left Book

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Club worked off their rebelliousness by plodding through yet another orange-coloured volume.

Economic problems predominated immediately after 1931: Free Trade, Imperial Preference, hunger-marches by the unemployed. Within two years there came an unexpected change. Foreign affairs were thrust into the centre of the stage; and henceforth these were the great stamping-ground of the Left. Hitler caused much trouble—not, of course, for the British Left alone. Foreign affairs had been simple until he turned up. Appeasement of the aggrieved Powers, Russia and Germany, would settle everything. Hence the Left had only to criticise the British Government and oppose British armaments. But now? Most of the Left, though not all, agreed that appeasement of Hitler was hopeless and, besides, immoral. Resisting him was part of "the struggle against Fascism." How was this struggle to be waged? By co-operating with the National Government? or by continuing to attack it? The Left never solved this problem. Usually they avoided it. Collective security—operating sanctions through the League of Nations—was an evasion of this kind. Once allied to fifty-two other governments (the number that would supposedly work with the League), co-operation with the National Government would pass unnoticed. The question caused great dispute. Labour Party conferences were rent by it; leaders expelled and re-admitted; bitter words spoken. Yet it was all quite pointless. There was no solution. For whatever the Left decided about co-operating with the National Government to resist Hitler, the National Government under MacDonald and Baldwin had no intention of resisting Hitler in co-operation with the Left or anyone else.

In 1935 resistance to aggression had a trial run against Mussolini—a sort of provincial preview before the real first night. The argument was the biggest family quarrel in the history of the Left. The Stalinist fellow-travellers, centred on the Left Book Club, clamoured for national unity and "sanctions," a euphemism for war. The Socialist League—an intellectualist successor to the dying I.L.P.—stuck to criticism of the British Government and proclaimed: "Our enemy is here." This was a hard judgment on poor Baldwin who had not an enemy in the world except perhaps Lloyd George. He was, however, a skilful political operator. Just when the Left had decided that its advocacy of collective security would enable it to defeat the "imperialist" government at a general election, Baldwin announced that he too was enthusiastic for the League of Nations. The Left had failed to win earlier elections by claiming that it was indistinguishable from Baldwin. Baldwin, however, won the election of 1935 by claiming that he was indistinguishable from the Left. Once the election was over, he put the League of Nations back on the shelf and returned to his somewhat amateurish pig-farming.

THE dress rehearsal had not been a success. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Left was as much at a loss as everyone else when Hitler reoccupied the Rhineland and the real problem presented itself. Baldwin made an alliance with France, thus guaranteeing to lose a war where he had shrunk from winning one. The Left committed itself to rearmament, but not under the National Government, one provision cancelling the other. What more could the Left do with Baldwin on their hands? They could not turn him out: the electorate had seen to that. It would have been equally futile to support him. Even the backing of a united House of Commons would not have convinced Baldwin that there was any better policy than twiddling his thumbs. It was, of course, this taste which endeared him to the electorate.

The Spanish Civil War brought the Left back to life, though not to effectiveness. Spain provided a concentrated meat-extract of all the emotions which the Left had experienced in previous years. Resistance to Fascism; class war; unity of the Left—difficult slogans at home, but easy to use of Spain. It was possible to admire the Spanish Communists without favouring Stalin; and the Spanish republic became a Utopia as Soviet Russia

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had been in the 'twenties, with co-educational schools, enlightened prisons, and civil marriage. There was even a healthy anti-clericalism—a great improvement on Soviet Russia, for no one could feel anti-clerical about the Orthodox Church. The one thing that went wrong was unfortunately the one thing that mattered. The Left failed to break the official refusal to supply the Spanish republic with arms. Left meetings demanded "arms for Spain." Major C. R. Attlee gave the Communist salute to the International Brigade. No arms went to Spain.

Still, the agitation over Spain was a real struggle, as deeply felt as the General Strike ten years before. There was genuine and justified emotion. The Left were asserting the great principles of freedom and democracy, however unsuccessfully. They were seeking to resist the systems of dictatorship which plunged the world into war only three years later. What were Baldwin and the so-called governing classes doing during this great crisis? They were fussing over the question whether a middle-aged man should marry a woman who had two previous husbands, both living. Much can be said against the Left. They were romantic, idealistic, unworldly, often foolish. But one thing can be said in their favour. No one on the Left cared whom Edward VIII married, whether he married, when, or how often. The age of Baldwin was over so far as the Left were concerned.

Totting up the account, I make one thumping debit and two credits. Ramsay MacDonald was the debit: the Left's present to the British people. The credits were the General Strike and support of the Spanish republic—two honourable causes of which any political movement could be proud. It is true that the Left failed to decide what it meant by Socialism, or how to get there. But these are problems to which no one has found a solution.

Delmore Schwartz

Holderlin

Now as before do you not hear their voices
Serene in the midst of their rejoicing,
Chanting to those who have hopes and make choices,
Clear as the birds in the thick summer foliage:
It is! It is!
We are! We are!
Clearly, as if they were us, and not us,
Hidden like the future, distant as the stars,
Having no more meaning than the fullness of music,
Chanting from the blue peaks where success,
Effort and desire are meaningless,
Surpassed at last in the joy of joy,
Chanting enchanted the blue's last view:
It is! It is!
This is eternity! Eternity is now!

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Once Upon a Time . . . . (II)

Many Winters Ago in Moscow

Malcolm Muggeridge

WHEN I was a newspaper correspondent in Moscow in the early 1930's I used to spend a lot of the day just walking the streets. This was partly because there was nothing else to do, but even if there had been I think I might still have thus employed my time. The unending stream of people, grey-faced, anonymously clothed, treading soundlessly on the snow, had a curious attraction. They seemed to be going nowhere in particular, to have no particular object in view. There was nothing in the shop windows to look at, and they did not, like street crowds in other cities, take stock of one another. Anonymous, inscrutable, drifting along without any evident expectation of better times or fear of worse ones, I found them comforting and companionable. They evoked none of the excitement or despair which make most large cities so uneasy and sleepless an environment. As evening came on, the effect was even more pronounced. It was like living in the mountains of the moon, with no restless desires or insistent ego to trouble the quiet, unmolesting passage of time.

Padding thus about Moscow's streets I had an overwhelming conviction that this scene would set the pattern for our time. So it was to be everywhere. So we were all to live. It was our inescapable fate. Here, in this remote and barbarous capital, in some inscrutable way the future was being shaped—a future symbolised by people padding, padding, interminably through drab, monotonous streets.

The life of a foreign correspondent in Moscow was even then largely detached from the society whose affairs we were supposed to be reporting. In the mornings we thumbed over the day's newspapers, spelling them out ourselves or with the help of a secretary. They were inconceivably long-winded and flat—enormous, turgid articles about the Five-Year Plan or the collectivisation of agriculture. I used in those days to nourish the hope that the Soviet régime would collapse under the weight of its sheer tedium. No human beings, I would reflect, not even Slavs, could indefinitely sustain this boredom of portentous words, these unillumined sentences meandering down column after column, this endless repetition of the same slogans and propositions. How wrong I was! There is, as I now know, no limit to what contemporary human beings will endure, in what is written, spoken, or visually presented to them, however repetitious, long-winded, and inherently false it may be. The more they venerate literacy, the greater becomes their capacity for suffering gladly any amount of boredom in terms of words and images; the more they persuade themselves that facts and figures can explain their circumstances, the greater is their credulity and tolerance of charlatanry.

Out of the newspapers we managed to extract items which could be made to seem like news. The newspapers were our only source of information. This vast, diverse country in which we were living, as far as we were con-

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cerned, might not have existed. In the beginning was the Word, and in the end, too—as propounded by *Pravda* and *Izvestia*.

Having confectioned a message of sorts, it had to be taken to the Press Department of the Foreign Office for censorship. This was a room furnished with gilt and red chairs and divans; a shabby, faded place which had survived unchanged from pre-Revolution days. There were, in particular, three officials with whom we dealt, all now dead; one, Oomansky, in an aeroplane accident, and the other two, Podolsky and Nehman, shot. Oomansky was an unattractive individual, with crinkly hair and a lot of gold teeth. He once, we had reason to believe, climbed into bed with an ageing Commissar's wife in the hope of bettering his chances of promotion. Podolsky was a sad, rather charming man with a pointed head, who, at official receptions, was skilled at transferring sandwiches and pastries from the buffet into his pockets to take back to his family, whom he adored. As for Nehman—a thin fringe of black beard gave him a rabbinical appearance. He once showed me some snapshots of his children in sailor suits at a seaside resort by the Black Sea.

These three would read over our messages like schoolmasters reading over an essay submitted to them for correction. "You can do better than this," one expected to find written in red ink on the message when it was handed back. Occasionally, they would frown, and delete a sentence or two. Newcomers were liable to argue the point, sometimes with heat, but later they too became reconciled to the system. After all, the messages were rubbish anyway—lies culled from lies. It scarcely mattered in what form they went. Our greatest hope—perhaps I should say mine, for some of the correspondents, especially the Americans, were an earnest lot —was to raise a laugh, or even a faint smile, as a message was perused. This happened extremely rarely. The most notable occasion was when Cholerton, correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, apropos of whether habeas corpus prevailed in the Soviet Union, remarked that, whatever might be the case about habeas corpus, without any question habeas cadaver prevailed there. Podolsky positively shouted with laughter as he crossed it out. Not surprisingly, he was the first to be liquidated.

Cholerton was far and away the most interesting and attractive of the foreign correspondents. He had drifted into the U.S.S.R. in the 'twenties just in time for Lenin's funeral—a leftish, scholarly, bearded figure, a fellow of King's in the Keynes era; extremely amusing, indolent, and companionable. When I think of Moscow, I think more of him than of anyone else. In an odd way, he belonged to the place. All day long he would lie on a sofa and talk mockingly of the régime, its bosses, its monstrous cruelties and stupidities. I delighted in his conversation. Once I said to Podolsky: "How do you put up with him when you know he loathes the whole show more than any of us?" "We find him irresistible," Podolsky replied. "He reminds us of the old days. He's just like a Russian intellectual." It was a fascinating remark, with fascinating implications. I should have known that, like his laughter over Habeas Cadaver, it constituted a death warrant.

Some of the correspondents, like Louis Fischer at that time, felt bound to defend the régime. They somehow managed to sustain their Soviet addiction, and to write little homilies in the *Nation* and other such publications on the theme: "I have seen the future and it works." They had seen the future all right, but it didn't work, except as the past had worked—brutally, mendaciously, and callously. Occasionally Fischer would go so far as to rebuke the rest of us for our flippancy and scepticism, with the air of a choirmaster calling sniggering, whispering choir-boys to order and due solemnity.

Other correspondents, like Walter Duranty of the *New York Times*, just wanted to stay in Moscow, where they managed to have a fairly prosperous and comfortable time on bootlegged roubles. The official rate was about six to the pound, but it was fairly easy to get four hundred. One would collect them in large newspaper parcels, like fried fish.

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Duranty presumably calculated that, in the circumstances, he might as well send what was pleasing to the Soviet authorities. And the *New York Times* was happy enough to use his messages. They were fit to print. It is part of the mystique of newspapers that what matters is where news derives, not whether it is reliable. In the eyes of night editors, the date-line is all. I remember in particular a message Duranty sent when the Ukraine was suffering an acute famine due to the forced collectivisation of agriculture. He dwelt picturesquely upon the apple-cheeked milkmaids, the bursting granaries, the fat cattle, and the lush crops. No doubt someone will one day dig all this out, and prove, on the strength of the *New York Times'* reputation for reliability, convincingly that, despite subsequent official admissions, there was no famine in the U.S.S.R. in the winter of 1932–33. Future historians are likely to find this age more difficult than the Dark Ages to document, but for the opposite reason—because there is so vast and contradictory an amount of documentation, mostly deliberately faked.

THE MOST touching figures were the eager American journalists who tried to apply, in the bizarre conditions of the U.S.S.R., the ordinary techniques of energetic journalism. They went after non-existent scoops, they prowled about in rubber shoes looking for news like Don Quixote looking for wrongs to redress, they sought interviews with Stalin—alas, sometimes got them, drenching the front pages of their newspapers with Soviet propaganda in the form of prefabricated questions and answers. This device, astonishingly enough, continues to work. The bait of an exclusive interview still serves to land mighty whales from the Western seas.

Actually, foreign journalists have been a great asset to the Soviet régime. They have to work for their visas. A correspondent knows that if his messages are unfriendly he will soon have to go. On the whole, he wants to stay, for professional, economic, and sometimes personal reasons. The price of staying is to be, by and large, sympathetically disposed to the régime in what he writes about it in his newspaper. He can, it is true, when he finally comes out, write an outspoken series which largely contradicts what he wrote while he was in, but a lot of the effect is lost by virtue of this contradiction.

On the way to the opening of the Dnieperstroy Dam, when we journalists had been talking bitterly about famine and terrorism, about the fraudulence to which we were ceaselessly subjected, an official who was travelling with us said: "I don't know what you're worrying about; you've got plenty to drink." It was true. We had, and to eat, too. The special train was overheated, and we were plied with food and drink. Most of the stations had been cleared for our passage, but occasionally, at a small one, there would be a little huddled group of starving mujhiks. At one such station, a German correspondent threw out a chicken leg he'd been gnawing. The mujhiks hurled themselves upon it. It was one of those little, quick scenes which live with one like stigmata.

The truth is that the Soviet authorities despised us, and not without reason. We could so easily be flattered; so easily, in an oblique way, be bribed. We were so manageable. The most we could hope to do was to smuggle out an uncensored piece through the diplomatic bag, and then, if and when it appeared, we would be called in by Oomansky, and read a lecture with threatening undertones. After two or three such piejaws, as we well knew, a correspondent was liable to have his visa withdrawn. The great successes of Soviet propaganda have been due, far more than to its own inherent force and skill, to the ease with which non-Soviet channels have been found for its dissemination. It was not because the trumpet blasts were strong, but because the walls of Jericho were already crumbling, that they fell down when the trumpet sounded. So it has been with the bastions of what we still like to call Western Civilisation.

The comic relief of our days in Moscow was provided by Intourists, who in those days flocked into the country in great num-

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bers. This is a spectacle I would not have missed for anything. It was far more interesting and diverting than the Soviet régime, which, once you got the hang of it, was relatively simple and monotonous—just the Magnificat come true; the mighty put down from their seats, and the humble and meek exalted, becoming mighty in their turn, and so fit to be put down. But the Intourists! They were hilarious—clergymen reverently walking through anti-God museums, Quakers smiling radiantly as they were told that in the U.S.S.R. capital punishment had been abolished, Liberals overjoyed to learn that what amounted to proportional representation had been introduced, town planners looking up awed at gimcrack buildings which were beginning to fall down before they were completed, feminists who could not contain their joy when they beheld women sweeping the streets on equal terms with men. I recall, among many such treasured memories, Sir Julian Huxley's statement, in a book he wrote about a visit to the U.S.S.R., that Stalin was in the habit of going to the railway sidings and helping to unload potatoes. Someone should make an anthology of what these Intourists said and wrote about the Soviet régime. It would be a compilation of folly probably unequalled in history—produced for the most part by those who, even to this day, are accustomed to enlighten and instruct us on B.B.C. panels and other like occasions. They exemplified, to a quite remarkable degree, Blake's saying that "they ever must believe a lie who see with, not through, the eye."

My own state of mind during this time in the U.S.S.R. was troubled and confused. I had gone there from the *Manchester Guardian* with a deep distrust of liberalism. The leading articles I had pounded out for two-and-a-half years about all sorts of subjects, from corporal punishment to the Indian Round Table Conference, nearly always ended up with: "It is greatly to be hoped. . . ." We were always greatly hoping —hoping that some mean and timidly ambitious politician would prove after all a far-seeing statesman; that fanaticism would give place to moderation, violence cease when reason was spoken, and all mankind accept the sagacious guidance proferred from Cross Street, Manchester, without, of course, interfering with the cotton trade. Ramsay MacDonald, then Prime Minister, put it in his inimitable way: "I want the lion (I don't know which is the lion) to lie down with the lamb (I don't know which is the lamb)." "It is greatly to be hoped"—over and over again, on a typewriter, in my head as I walked beside the dingy little canal near where I lived, on the train going to London, out in the—at that time—forlorn and desolate Lancashire towns, their streets crowded with idle men waiting for the cinemas to open. What, oh what, was greatly to be hoped? I asked myself, and, like Pilate, did not wait for an answer.

Oomansky was never tired of praising the *Manchester Guardian*. He gave me dinner in the huge, ornate former residence of a rich Jewish merchant. The furnishings and decorations represented everything he most admired and yearned to enjoy. There were innumerable little mirrors on the walls, and they seemed to be blinking at me as I got drunk. From very far away, I could hear Oomansky's voice telling me how, alone of the Capitalist Press, the *Manchester Guardian* was virtuous and admirable. One of the most satisfactory aspects of human life is the apt manner in which the stage is set, though, alas, the lines which have to be said, the play which has to be performed, is often sadly incoherent and banal. I could not have imagined a better décor for Oomansky to flash his gold teeth in adulation of the *Manchester Guardian* and the fine tradition of British Liberalism.

There was another reason for Oomansky to hold me in some regard. I was connected by marriage with Mrs. Sidney Webb, and had, indeed, spent the last week-end before leaving for Moscow at Passfield to receive her and her consort's blessing. These two extraordinary individuals were then in the high-tide of their Soviet enthusiasm. She paced up and down with her large quick strides, while

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he sat, minute, in his chair. Together they intoned their Fabian admiration for the Soviet régime and all its works, one taking up the refrain when the other paused. His particular admiration was for the Consumer's Co-operatives, hers for the Party élite and their abstemious ways. What they really admired was the régime's sheer power; the fact that there were no votes to be taken, no motions to be referred back, no tedious, bone-headed trade unionists to be coaxed and cajoled. This emerged when Mrs. Webb said: "It's true that in the Soviet Union people disappear." She accentuated this last word, *"disappear,"* and I realised, even in my somewhat euphoric condition, how happy she would have been if similar arrangements prevailed in the L.C.C., and recalcitrant councillors and aldermen would be made likewise to disappear.

Their house was comfortably appointed; there were two elderly Scottish maids (one of them asked: "Do you think the Five-Year Plan answers?") to see that meals were on time, and hot-water bottles duly available. We went for walks over the adjoining scrubland with a dog named Sandy; and still, while neighbouring stockbrokers played golf or took their ease with a glass and a Sunday newspaper, her voice rang out, with his a muffled, sibilant echo, proclaiming the excellence of a dictatorship of the proletariat, and how, because Lenin had translated their *History of Trade Unionism* while in Siberia, they had become Soviet ikons. Rum ikons, I thought, even then—or perhaps, after all, not so rum.

When Oomansky had finished with the *Manchester Guardian*, he moved on to the Webbs. He hoped that he, too, would have an opportunity to visit Passfield, and pay his homage to the estimable couple who lived there. I hoped so too. The little mirrors were beginning to blink rather frighteningly. It was time to go. I said good-night to Oomansky, leaving him, doubtless, like Podolsky, to gather up some of the feast's leavings for his family's consumption. Outside, the snow had been falling. Against its whiteness, buildings were black shadows. The town seemed almost deserted—just an occasional figure hurrying by. Silent and deserted, and yet I still had the feeling that somehow, just now, this was the centre of the spider's web of history. Snow crunched underfoot, and the silence was oppressive in its intensity. I began to shout, but whether in defiance or acquiescence or just out of fatuity, I cannot now remember.

WE WERE all the time trying to formulate thoughts and views about the régime. There was nothing but the régime—nothing else to talk or think or read about; no girls, except the little, grisly band of over-powdered, over-scented ones who were hand-picked to be our companions; no unexpected encounters or chance conversations. We lived in a small, closed world of our own, like forlorn Sahibs in one of the smaller Indian stations in the old days. At public functions we would occasionally see Stalin, Molotov, and the others file on to a platform. From afar we watched them, distant, pigmy figures, who might have been on a television screen.

There was also the British Embassy, where we occasionally visited. The Ambassador, Sir Esmond Ovey, had a plan for abolishing unemployment, but somehow I never got the hang of it. This meant that it was an inexhaustible subject of conversation. He had around him the usual staff of first, second, and third secretaries—men in dark suits, with that particular sort of closed, self-satisfied face which the diplomatic service produces. They crop up everywhere, and, as disasters have thickened, it has been interesting to observe how their self-satisfaction has survived intact. Our downhill course as a nation has been followed by these discreet and elegant funeral mutes, who arrive at the graveyard in perfect order, without the slightest sign of breathlessness or disconcertment.

In those days in Moscow there were still some survivors of the pre-Revolution liberal intelligentsia—strange, faded, shabby figures who emerged occasionally like ghosts to recall a Fabian summer school they had once attended, to borrow a copy of the *New States-*

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man, to reminisce about a visit to Tolstoy, or to ask for news of Mrs. Besant; ladies in high-necked blouses, men with bad breath and threadbare suits who could quote Walt Whitman and had read William Morris; pacifists, anti-vivisectionists, feminists, the last poor eddy of a tide which had once strongly flowed. Their company was painful but inescapable; their efforts to uphold and justify the régime which had engulfed them were as unconvincing as protestations on behalf of an old expired love. They have all long since —to use Mrs. Webb's favourite word—disappeared.

I used occasionally also to see Prince Mirsky, whom I had vaguely known in England. He was a sombre, mournful man who obviously regretted his eccentric decision to return to his native land despite an aristocratic background in pre-Revolution Russia, a spell of fighting with the Whites in the civil war, and considerable involvement in extreme reactionary emigré politics in Paris and London. In the course of writing a biography of Lenin he became convinced of the validity of Leninism, and it was on the strength of this that he was given permission to come to Moscow, where, of course, he automatically became a Soviet national. His chief utility was to be produced at Intourist gatherings as a proof that one could be a prince and still *persona grata* in the U.S.S.R. Oomansky would point him out, gleefully dwelling upon his title and his record. This did not please Mirsky, but there was nothing he could do about it except get drunk on Intourist vodka, which was usually in good supply. Drinking only made him the more melancholy, and he would sit with his head sunk on his breast, deeply silent, and quite unresponsive to the Intourists twittering round him.

Mirsky would come from time to time and take a bath in my flat. As he dried, we chatted. His body, I remember, was oddly youthful and graceful, and there on top of it was that bearded, battered old head, with its sunken, forlorn eyes. Occasionally he would take me to a House of Foreign Writers which he frequented. It was a kind of Soviet P.E.N. Club, full of infinitely obscure (at least to me) men—and women-of-letters, for most of whom residence in the House of Foreign Writers constituted their sole literary credentials. The atmosphere was decidedly old-fashioned. They discussed questions like the nature of Beauty and its relation to Truth, but not without a touch of anxiety, as though even this anodyne topic might, unless they were careful, move into dangerous channels. Their clothing and habits were likewise "bohemian" in the old Café Royal style. The only name I knew was Aragon's. On one occasion he stood at the back of the room and recited with that particular unction that the French give to verse a poem he had lately written on the Communist Party.

I imagine that most of the then occupants of the House of Foreign Writers have likewise long ago disappeared, though not, of course, Aragon. Others, doubtless, have taken their places. It is like the audience at the Windmill Theatre; as one row clears another moves up to be nearer the stage. In Berlin recently I was discussing Howard Fast's recent apologia with Melvin Lasky, and he remarked, perceptively, but I thought a shade wearily, that just at that moment a Chinese student was doubtless acquiring the works of Lenin, thereby embarking upon a course which would culminate in his apologia some twenty years hence.

At the House of Foreign Writers Mirsky was as morose as at the Intourist reception. He fixed a female there, for whom he appeared to nourish a passion, with his sombre eyes, and turned for solace once more to the vodka bottle. For the others he appeared to have only contempt. I was glad to be his protégé rather than theirs. He earned his living by writing literary articles for the Soviet Press, mostly about European and American writers like François Mauriac, T. S. Eliot, Osbert Sitwell, and Sinclair Lewis. They were the sort of heavily denigratory articles which he would have been writing in Paris or in London. The last to appear was, in a similar strain, on the occasion of a Pushkin anniversary. Unfortunately, all unknown to him, the line had

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changed, and Pushkin had become once more a great national poet instead of an odious court lackey. Thenceforth Mirsky was seen no more, and presumably died in a concentration camp or at the hands of a firing squad.

JOURNALISTS, in my time, were still allowed to travel, and I went off by myself to the Ukraine and the Caucasus. It was very pleasant rolling along in old-fashioned *wagon-lits*, with glasses of tea constantly available, and with the possibility of halting conversation with Party officials and other dignitaries who alone were permitted to travel first-class. Once, an ordinary peasant, rather drunk, lurched into the restaurant car. I have never in my life seen anyone ejected so quickly and so expertly.

The railway carriage was a haven of rest and good-cheer. Without, there were unspeakable horrors. One left the train with dread, and caught another with relief. Khrushchev (and he, if anyone, ought to know because he was a high official in the Ukraine at the time) has provided an authoritative account of the appalling consequences of the forced collectivisation of agriculture. To me, even in an age that has overflowed with horrors, it all stands out as particularly horrible—the deserted villages, without any living creature, animal or human, left in them, and the groaning train in a siding packed with peasant families who were being deported.

I finished up at a German agricultural concession near Rostov. It was a little oasis of plenty and prosperity set in the sad wilderness which collectivisation had brought to pass in the surrounding countryside. The Germans in their green suits showed me their fields and granaries, their livestock and poultry, with immense satisfaction. They were friendly and jovial. In the evening we sat and talked and smoked. Their self-conscious efficiency was somewhat irritating, but it was impossible not to agree with them when they dwelt upon how prosperous this vast country might be, and to what a fearful plight it had been reduced. At nine o'clock they turned on their radio-set to get the German news, and we heard that Hitler had that day become Chancellor. Probably they were expecting it, but to me it was a complete surprise because I had for some time been out of touch with what was happening outside Russia. I expected them to be downcast. After all, they were agronomes, fond of music, kindly in their ways—or so it seemed. "But this is terrible," I said, assuming their agreement. Actually, they were delighted by the news, and made no effort to hide their satisfaction. They clustered eagerly round the large map of Southern Russia that hung on the wall, and scarcely bothered to answer when I asked what Hitler and his Nazis could possibly have to offer the likes of them. I knew then that another war was certain.

I CAME out of the U.S.S.R. by way of Latvia, stopping off at Leningrad. While there I went out to the cemetery to look at Dostoevsky's grave. It was difficult to find, and quite untended. While I stood beside it, a Communist funeral was in progress. The hearse was red instead of black, but otherwise it seemed like any other funeral. There were the same tears, the same consigning of dust to dust, the same embarrassed expressions on the faces of the less involved mourners. What a turn-out there must have been for Dostoevsky's interment! What orations! What an assembling of (to use the precious phrase we owe to Sir William Haley) Top People as his poor old carcass was put in earth.

There were not many passengers on the train, but when we crossed the Soviet frontier all of us went into the corridor. We looked back at the small white stakes which marked the end of Soviet territory, and at the G.P.U. guards in their long, grey greatcoats; and suddenly, quite ridiculously, we all began to shake our fists and shout and jeer. It was quite spontaneous, and drew us together. Up to then we had not exchanged a word. Thenceforth, we chattered together, with slight undertones of hysteria, like old and intimate friends. The buffet at Riga station seemed like paradise, and all the open, well-

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fed, and unfrightened faces round us were wonderful to behold.

This ecstasy soon passed. Man cannot live by buffets alone, and as things got into focus one realised that all these seemingly radiant visages were only fat, pasty, bourgeois, clutching their briefcases and counting out their money. The anger, however, remained.

Now I feel it no longer. Anger is a product of a hurt ego rather than of others' wrongs or sufferings. What one was angry about was one's own capacity to be beguiled. This is the fallacy of anti-Communism, or anti-anything. There cannot be darkness at noon because noon cannot be darkened. But, alas, a mind can be darkened, making the bright noon seem dark.

I then expressed my anger in the usual ways, arguing, talking, writing. Doubtless, in a sense, it was a just anger, but now that I am older I distrust anger altogether. The end of *Lear* appeals to me more than *Timon of Athens*, and Saint Paul's Epistles and the Book of Common Prayer more than Marx or Cobbett or Carlyle or any of the vast army of the enraged and indignant.

In a mood of anger I wrote *Winter in Moscow*, which still enjoys a certain repute among old Moscow hands because of some fairly recognisable portraits of local characters, Russian, foreign, and Intourist. I was flattered to find that Mr. Bohlen, lately United States Ambassador in Moscow, regarded it as a collector's piece. Also, I wrote numerous magazine and newspaper articles. One that remained unprinted because at that time it was considered too fantastic was called "Red Imperialism," and pointed out that a mission to free the toiling masses in countries adjoining the U.S.S.R. could easily get translated into what would be in effect the old familiar Pan-Slavism. When I read an account in the German Foreign Office archives of Molotov's conversations with Hitler in Berlin at the time of the Nazi–Soviet Pact, I chuckled over this. Most journalistic prophecies are mercifully forgotten, but it is gratifying once in a while to make one which is borne out by events.

When I think of Russia now I remember, not the grey, cruel, set faces of its masters, but rather how kindly and humorous those subjected to them managed to remain despite the physical and moral suffering they had to endure. I remember a little painted church standing in the moonlight like an exquisite jewel. Someone had managed, in inconceivably difficult circumstances, to keep its bright colours fresh and triumphant. I remember, too, going to see a superb production of *The Cherry Orchard* at the Stanislavsky Theatre with a Russian woman who had been through the Civil War and the appalling famine which followed, and how she remarked of the play: "I can't understand what they're all bothering about. They've got plenty to eat." Above all, I remember going to an Easter service in Kiev—the crowded cathedral, the overwhelmingly beautiful music, the intense sense which the congregation conveyed as they worshipped of eternity sweeping in like great breakers on the crumbling shores of time. Religion, wisely, assumes misfortune, and so survives, when earthly utopian hopes, which must inevitably be disappointed, soon perish.

No one but a fool will contend that the Revolution might better not have happened, or, for that matter, that its occurrence was blessed. The point is that it happened, and the miracle is, not what it has destroyed, but what it has failed to destroy. I hear Podolsky laughing at Habeas Cadaver, and his laughter engulfs the bleep-bleep of the Sputnik as well as the weeping and wailing of the Sputnikless. In a summary of Boris Pasternak's novel, "Dr. Zhivago," I note that his hero feels a pigmy before the Revolution—"the monstrous machine of the future," but that, at the same time, he cannot but reflect: "What a master operation. To seize . . . cut out . . . so magnificently and at one stroke all the old suppurating wounds." It is very much how I feel myself. Yet how remarkable that Pasternak should have outlived Stalin and still have been able so to feel! How ominous for the grisly band who have inherited the "monstrous machine" to which the Revolution gave rise!

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Ignazio Silone

The Welcoming Committee

A NUMBER of dignitaries—the mayor and the town clerk, the parish priest Don Franco, and the new components of the town council, two of them artisans, one a peasant—had gathered in the town hall to discuss the festive programme planned for the following day. They were now only waiting for Don Serafino in order to begin; but as time passed and there was still no sign of the old priest, they decided to start the ball rolling with an informal exchange of views among themselves.

Clearing his throat, the mayor began:

" 'Cisterna opens wide her arms to welcome back her illustrious son.' " He paused dramatically before continuing: "There, gentlemen, if I may be allowed to make the suggestion, you have our guiding theme, our slogan for to-morrow. . . . Something on those lines, anyway, don't you think?" He turned to Don Franco. "How does it strike you?" he enquired.

The parish priest—plump, squat, and although still quite young, almost completely bald—was sitting at the window, enjoying the cool evening air.

"I'll have my say later on," he answered with a bland smile. "Those dustmen that went on strike, by the way—how are they making out?"

The mayor turned to the clerk.

"And you?" he asked.

A thin, bespectacled creature of swarthy, somewhat greenish hue, the clerk was at that moment intent on checking accounts in a big ledger, and took no notice of the mayor's question.

The three newly-appointed councillors sat perched with timid ceremony on the edge of a settee beside the mayor's desk, trying to consult each other in furtive glances. The rôle of spokesman was assumed by the oldest of the three—a wizened little man, all skin and bone, whose extreme poverty was evidenced by the number of patches on his clothes. He began hesitantly, with apologies for having to raise a matter which, as he put it, was merely one of common politeness. Then he plunged on:

"What's to be done about the people who informed on Signor Cipriani and got him arrested, back in the days when he was just a schoolmaster? Oughtn't we to drop a sort of friendly hint to them about staying away from the reception to-morrow?"

"Er-yes, of course," the mayor muttered. "You have a point there, undoubtedly. And now for the opinion of these two gentlemen," he went on, raising his eyebrows to interrogate the parish priest and the clerk.

"My dear fellow," the clerk began, looking up from his ledger, "if you're going to stand for that sort of. . . ." But he broke off. He had a way, when speaking, of jerking his head backwards, as though expecting a slap.

"Well, never mind," he concluded, "you see what I mean. . . ."

The councillor was gaining confidence.

"And what about the ones that threw stones at him when they saw him handcuffed to two policemen?" he pursued. "I don't know if any of you remember that. I just happened to be there. I was on my way back from the mill, with the donkey. . . ."

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Another councillor had been there too and could recall the scene. "Stop that," one of the policemen had shouted. "You don't want to hit us by mistake, do you?"

The tale was heard in silence. The old councillor's proposal had caused general embarrassment. After an uneasy pause, the clerk again raised his head from his ledger and said with a grim smile:

"If we're going to exclude all the unworthy ones, may I ask who'll be left to attend the reception? A handful of ignorant peasants, maybe, but no respectable people at all. Well, am I right?"

The mayor had a few painful moments while he thought it over. Finally he decided that there would be no discrimination against anyone.

"We're living in a democracy now," he announced. "Democracy means we're all equal, doesn't it?"

But the formula that quelled every scruple, including perhaps even those of the old councillor, was the one evolved by Don Franco.

"Andrea Cipriani," said the reverend gentleman, rolling the words slowly and grandiloquently on his tongue, "now that he has attained such an exalted position in the State, will surely know that the best revenge of all is—forgiveness."

This aphorism was found by the mayor to hit the nail exactly on the head, and after getting Don Franco to repeat it, he copied it out on a scrap of paper. It would come in useful for his speech next day.

"And if you want to make it sound even better still," the clerk suggested in a whisper, "tell them Garibaldi said it. That's guaranteed to bring the house down."

THE mayor felt that all the really important questions had now been settled, subject to the approval of Don Serafino, but he was reckoning without Don Franco's practical turn of mind.

"So far we've merely dealt with the rhetorical fol-de-rols," Don Franco protested. "We haven't even touched on what, if I may say so, is the heart of the matter. Don't you realise what a stroke of luck it is for a god-forsaken village like this to have been the birthplace of someone that gets into politics?"

He opened a leather brief-case and produced the first of what appeared to be a whole series of folders. It was bulging with documents and laconically labelled PROJECTS—a word which, for the others present, required no further elucidation.

"Do you really think it's a good idea," the mayor demanded, "to start pestering Andrea Cipriani with that kind of thing the moment he sets foot in the place? Wouldn't it be more intelligent to wait until the atmosphere's warmed up a bit?"

"We can't afford to waste time," the priest declared trenchantly. "We must strike while the iron's hot."

"Yes, this is our chance and we'd better grab it," the clerk opined. "The snag about political majorities is, they're here to-day, gone to-morrow.... Alas!" he hastened to add, noticing that one of the younger councillors had frowned at the remark.

Meanwhile Don Franco had opened his folder and was deploying his papers on the table.

"Before we proceed to draw up our list of petitions," he said, "I venture to suggest that there is one particularly urgent need to which we should give top priority. If the inherent dignity of Cisterna is to be commensurate with its new prestige, we must see to it that the village is provided, as speedily as possible and of course out of government funds, with a war memorial of its own. I trust," he concluded, "that there are no dissenting voices on this point."

The first dissenting voice to be raised was that of the old councillor.

"One-third of the population is living in caves and shacks," he remarked mildly.

Don Franco had foreseen this objection and was ready for counter-attack.

"The cult of the dead," he affirmed in a ponderous tone, "is the hallmark of civilisation. The higher the civilisation, the greater the importance assigned to it. Don't you think it's a disgrace that Cisterna should still be without a war memorial? It's a state of

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affairs that we ought to feel continually preying on our minds."

"I haven't seen a monument like the one you're talking about in any of the other villages around here," the old councillor said.

"All the more reason for Cisterna to take the shine out of them," Don Franco retorted in triumph. "Their envy will be the crowning tribute to our superior status."

"Quite a persuasive argument, that," the clerk conceded with a titter.

"We're being asked to erect a war memorial," one of the younger councillors put in. "All right, but for which war? Is it for the war of liberation?"

The mayor's jaw dropped, and he looked questioningly at Don Franco.

"I don't propose to let myself be drawn into controversy," the priest said curtly.

"But we can't erect a war memorial," the councillor insisted, "without telling people which war it's meant to be for."

"I did anticipate that difficulty," the priest admitted after a moment's embarrassment. "I've been thinking that in order to get over it we might resort to allegory. What would you say to a marble statue of Glory embracing Sacrifice?"

With one voice, the three councillors demanded: "What sacrifice?"

"The abstract idea of Sacrifice," Don Franco lashed back, mottled with vexation. "The Idea—the Concept, that is. The Idea covers everything."

But these were frivolous objections compared to the one now put forward by the clerk.

"Do you mean to say you'd let a thing like that be shown in a public place?" he asked, looking outraged. "Bang in front of the parish church? Don Franco, I'm amazed at you. Where's your imagination? If the sculptor is to represent Glory embracing Sacrifice, he'll have to make a statue of a woman in the act of kissing a man. Didn't that occur to you? And what's more, the kiss won't just be a passing moment flashed on a cinema screen: being made of solid marble, it'll of course go on indefinitely. Do you realise what that means? Day and night, rain or shine, without ever getting a moment to come up for air, that woman will be kissing a man. A fine example, I must say, for the little girls in your catechism class."

"It'd be enough to turn any man's stomach, no matter how bent on sacrifice he was," the mayor commented with a grimace of disgust.

The priest, purple-faced by this time, hastened to propose some variations.

"We could have Glory stroking Sacrifice's head—a sort of maternal caress," he said. "Or would you rather she just smiled at him?"

The old councillor, too, was opposed to the scheme, but for a different reason altogether. Glory, declared the old councillor, should take no interest whatsoever in Sacrifice, and should even refuse to look him in the face, until Sacrifice was ready to devote himself to the poor people still living in caves and shacks.

"My second project will be concerned with the welfare of the common people," said Don Franco, who was now in a slightly chastened mood; and to prove his words, he opened his brief-case and whipped out a new folder.

"But how do you know we're not wasting our breath?" the old councillor broke in suddenly, rising to his feet. "What makes you take it for granted that Andrea Cipriani will agree to our proposals?"

These words, uttered in a tone that was almost one of defiance, had the effect of momentarily damping the parish priest's reckless enthusiasm for bricks, mortar, marble, and architects' blueprints. He looked to right and left, waiting for the mayor to dispel the cloud of pessimistic doubt and thus enable him to expound his other projects. But the mayor's brow was furrowed with gloom.

"Frankly, I don't know what to say," he admitted. "We mustn't lose sight of the fact that Cipriani's been away from here nearly twelve years. He's been in gaol, he's been in banishment, he's fought as a partisan commander; and now, with all that behind him, he's coming back to Cisterna to-morrow for

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the first time. How can we possibly guess what he's got up his sleeve?"

"If that's how you feel about it," Don Franco complained pettishly, "it seems rather pointless to stay here cooling our heels any longer."

"Let's just wait for Don Serafino," the mayor pleaded. "He may know more than we do. I think he's been in correspondence with Cipriani."

"I don't propose to wait," said the parish priest in a tone of injury. "Good-bye till tomorrow." He swept his papers together, rose to his feet and departed. The three councillors filed out in his wake, having suddenly realised that it was supper-time.

"Strictly in confidence," the clerk asked the mayor, after glancing around to see whether there was anyone within earshot, "strictly in confidence, could you enlighten me as to what exactly this Cipriani fellow stands for? Politically speaking, I mean."

"As far as I can make out," the mayor replied, "he's what they call a humanitarian."

The clerk was seized by a paroxysm of mirth that very nearly choked him.

"You're not serious?" he said. "Are you trying to tell me, strictly in confidence of course, that he's just a sucker?"

"That's all," the mayor assured him. "Just a sucker."

Ted Hughes

Thrushes

Terrifying are the attent sleek thrushes on the lawn,
More coiled steel than living—a poised
Dark deadly eye, those delicate legs
Triggered to stirrings beyond sense—with a start a bounce a stab
Overtake the instant and drag out some writhing thing.
No indolent procrastinations and no yawning stares,
No sighs or head-scratchings. Nothing but bounce and stab
And a ravening second.

Is it their single-mind-sized skulls, or a trained
Body, or genius, or a nestful of brats
Gives their days this bullet and automatic
Purpose? Mozart's brain had it, and the shark's mouth
That hungers down the blood-smell even to a leak of its own
Side and devouring of itself: efficiency which
Strikes too streamlined for any doubt to pluck at it
Or obstruction deflect.

With a man it is otherwise. Heroisms on horseback,
Outstripping his desk-diary at a broad desk,
Paring at a tiny ivory ornament
For years: his act worships itself—while for him,
Though he bends to be blent in the prayer, how loud and above what
Furious spaces of fire do the distracting devils
Orgy and hosannah, under what wilderness
Of black silent waters weep.

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Chagall's Early Years

An Interview by Edouard Roditi

I MET Chagall for the first time around 1930, at a Montparnasse café, the Dôme. He was that evening in the company of a group of artists and intellectuals from Central and Eastern Europe. Unless my memory betrays me and I have confused in a single image my recollections of several such Montparnasse meetings, among those present were the sculptor Ossip Zadkine, the Yiddish novelist Scholem Asch, the Soviet publicist Ilya Ehrenburg, the German film and theatre producer-director Erik Charell, as well as a number of others who came and went, all through this evening spent around a couple of café-tables where one spoke French, Russian, German, and Yiddish. Later, I met Chagall again in New York, where he was a refugee during the war years. Again, I have recollections of much coming and going, in an apartment on Riverside Drive.

To-night, however, there are only five of us: Chagall; his wife Vava; the photographer André Ostier; the art-dealer Heinz Berggruen; and myself. On the walls of this Paris apartment in the Île Saint Louis, which Chagall has recently acquired as a home-away-from-home for occasional visits to the French capital, one is surprised to find as samples of the master's work a few posters of his recent exhibitions. These are pinned up as in the rooms of an art-student who cannot yet afford any original works of the painters whom he admires. After a while, Chagall suggests that I accompany him into the next room where we shall be undisturbed. To be more at ease, he lies down on a big blue divan-bed, leaving me seated almost behind him. As he begins to answer my questions—or to not answer them—I feel as if I were almost psychoanalysing him. The flow of his memories is so torrential that I find it difficult to note all that he says. As he speaks, he stares at the blank white wall ahead of him, a screen on which he seems to project and visualise all that he recounts to me.

*

"At what age did you paint your first picture or first begin to draw?"

"I have never known when I was really born. Officially, I was born in 1887, which explains why my seventieth birthday has now been celebrated—for instance in the New York Museum of Modern Art, which recently staged a special show of my graphic work on that occasion. But am I really a septuagenarian? In spite of my grey hairs, I often feel much younger. Besides, my parents may, as was frequently done in those years in Tsarist Russia, have cheated about the exact date of my birth. If they could manage to prove that I was four years older than my next brother, they could obtain my exemption from military service by claiming that, as the eldest son, I was already contributing to the support of my family."

"Did your family encourage your ambition to become an artist?"

"In our little old provincial ghetto, among the petty traders and craftsmen that my family knew, we had no idea of what it means to be an artist. In our own home, for instance, we never had a single picture, print, or reproduction, at most a couple of photographs of members of the family. Until 1906, I never had occasion to see, in Vitebsk, such a thing as a drawing. But one day, in grade school, I saw one of my class-mates busy reproducing, in drawing, a magazine illustration. This particular boy happened to be my worst enemy, the best student in the class and also the one who taunted me the most mercilessly for being such a *Schlemihl*, because I never seemed able to concentrate or to learn anything in school. As I watched him draw, I was completely dumbfounded. To me, this experience was like a vision, a true revelation in black and white. I asked him how he managed such a miracle. 'Don't be such a fool,' he replied. 'All you need to do is to take a book out of the public library and then try your luck at copying one of the illustrations out of it, as I am doing right now.'

"And that is how," Chagall added after a pause, "I became an artist. I went to the public library and chose there a bound volume of the illustrated Russian periodical *Niwa*, and brought it home. The first illustration that caught my eye in it and that I tried to copy was a portrait of the composer Anton Rubinstein. I was fascinated by the number of wrinkles and lines in

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his face that seemed to quiver and to live before my eyes, so I began to copy it. But I was still far from thinking of art as a vocation or a profession. At most, it was still but a hobby, though I already began to pin up all my drawings, at home, on our walls."

"One of Soutine's biographers writes that his parents were horrified, and had even beaten him, when he had first expressed his ambition, as a boy, to become a painter. Did your family, in the ghetto of Vitebsk, react as strongly as Soutine's family in their small-town ghetto near Smolensk?"

"My father was a devout Jew and perhaps understood that our religion forbade us to create graven images and, in the opinion of the more orthodox Rabbis, even to reproduce any living creature. But it never occurred to any of us that these little pieces of paper on which I copied what I saw printed on other pieces of paper might be what was thus being so solemnly forbidden. And that is perhaps why nobody, among my relatives and friends, was at all shocked, at first, by my new hobby.

"Then, one day, another class-mate of mine, a boy who came of a family that was wealthier than ours and more cultured, dropped by at our home, and chanced to see some of my drawings pinned to the wall of the room where I worked and slept. He seemed most impressed by my drawings and proclaimed enthusiastically that I was a real artist. But what did this strange word mean? I had always been somewhat lazy in my studies, a bit absent-minded and unwilling to concentrate or to learn. At home, nobody ever asked me what trade or profession I might want to study. My family was very poor, and the poor cannot afford the luxury of a vocation. On the contrary, boys with a background like mine are generally glad to accept the first job that comes their way, as soon as they are old enough to work. Besides, I could scarcely imagine, at that time, that I would ever be able to do anything very useful in life. At best, I might qualify for some unskilled job, like my father, who found it hard to make both ends meet on his meagre salary as a warehouseman for a wholesale dealer in pickled and salted fish. Still, this mysterious word 'artist' might mean a somewhat better opening for me, in my life, and I began to ask my classmate what it meant. He then mentioned the names of the great painters of Tsarist Russia, men like Riepin and Verestchaguine, painters of vast historical scenes that were frequently reproduced at that time in such magazines as those from which I picked the models for my own drawings. But I had never paid any attention to the names of the artists whose works were reproduced in *Niwa*, and nobody in my family had ever mentioned them to me.

"Be that as it may, my madness became apparent for the first time that day. I now knew that I had a vocation, even if my own father still had no idea what this profession that I had chosen really meant. As for me, I already understood that it at least meant my having to attend some school and obtaining some diploma there. That day, my mother was baking bread in the kitchen when I interrupted her to discuss my new plan. But what I said about being an artist made no sense at all to her, and she practically told me to go climb a tree."

"Was it in Vitebsk that you managed to obtain your first training as an artist?"

"Yes, but it was no easy task for me to find a teacher. I had to run all over the city before I found a place where I might study my new trade. After enquiring everywhere, I finally found the studio of Pen, a provincial portrait-painter who also taught a few pupils on the side. I begged my mother to accompany me on my first visit to the master, much as I might have asked either of my parents to come and discuss with some craftsman under what conditions he would accept me as an apprentice. But my mother preferred to consult an uncle of mine beforehand, a man who read newspapers and thus enjoyed, in our family circle, the reputation of being a cultured man of the world. This uncle of mine then mentioned the same names, as examples of all that being an artist could mean, as my classmate. But my uncle also added that men such as Riepin and Verestchaguine also had talent, something that had never yet occurred to any of us. My mother decided, however, on the spot, that she would allow me to study art if Professor Pen, who certainly knew his own business, expressed the view that I had talent. All this must have taken place in 1907 and, if I remember right, I must have then been scarcely seventeen years old."

"What were your impressions, on your first visit to Pen's studio?"

"When we got there, my mother and I, the master was out, on some errand downtown. But we were greeted by one of his pupils, who was busy in a corner of the studio, drawing something or other. I had brought along, under my arm, a whole bundle of my own drawings, to show them to the master. When my mother saw, in Pen's studio, so many fine portraits of be-whiskered generals, their chests all bright with medals, and of the wives of local gentry, with their opulent and much bejewelled bosoms, she experienced a moment of hesitation. 'My poor boy,' she sighed, 'you'll never manage to make the grade.' She was indeed ready to turn back

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and to drag me home again in her wake. I was still so timid that I held tight to my mother's skirt whenever we left our part of town, as if I were a child and afraid of losing her in the crowd.

"But my mother lingered in Pen's studio, admiring the master's work and questioning his pupil about the chances of a future that this strange trade might offer a promising beginner. The young Bohemian answered her questions somewhat laconically, making a great show of cynicism. Art, he explained, isn't a trade that implies keeping a shop and selling any wares. At this point, Pen returned to his studio from his errands in town. Immediately, I produced my drawings and began to show them to him. My mother asked him if I had any talent. Pen answered evasively that there was 'something' in my work. But his few words of appreciation sufficed and I was thus enrolled on the spot as one of his pupils.

"I did not attend Professor Pen's classes very long, as I soon understood that he could only teach me a kind of art that had little in common with my own aspirations. These were each day becoming more conscious and clear to me, though they still consisted in knowing what I didn't want to paint rather than what I really wanted to achieve. Still, old Pen was kind enough to realise what sacrifices my studies implied for my poor family, and he soon offered to teach me free of charge. My progress was, however, so rapid that, in 1908, I was already able to move to Saint Petersburg and to enrol there in the Free Academy where Leon Bakst taught."

"Wasn't Bakst already a close friend of Serge Diaghilev and one of the most famous of the designers of sets and costumes for the Russian Ballets?"

"Yes, Bakst was one of the leaders of a group of Saint Petersburg artists that was known as the *Mir Iskoustva*, 'The World of Art.'"

"What was your own style of painting, when you first came into contact with Bakst and his school?"

"All my works of this first period are now lost. I suppose you might have called me, at that time, a Realist Impressionist, as I was still following a trend that had been introduced in Russia by a number of our teachers who, on their return from Paris, had begun to spread among their friends and pupils a few vague notions borrowed from Pissaro and Jules Adler, from Sisley and Bastien Lepage."

"How did it happen that all your early works of this period are lost?"

"When I first arrived in the Tsarist capital, I was very short of money and, one day, discovered a frame-maker—his name was Antokolsky, like the famous Russian sculptor—whose shop-window was full of photographs and of framed pictures that he seemed to have on sale for various painters who were also his customers. I managed to overcome my natural timidity sufficiently to bring all my work to this man Antokolsky and to ask him if he thought he might be able to sell any of it. He asked me to leave him my paintings and to come back in a few days, allowing him time to think it over. When I returned a week later, it was like a scene from a Kafka novel. Antokolsky behaved as if he had never see me before and claimed that I had not left him any pictures. As for me, I had of course neglected to ask him for a receipt. I even remember his asking me: 'Who are you?' I have never been able to trace any of the paintings that I left with him, so I often wonder whether he ever sold them."

"Was it in Saint Petersburg that you finally weaned yourself away from your earlier Realist-Impressionist style?"

"Yes, though not at once. One of the first pictures that I painted in the Tsarist capital was a copy of a landscape by Isaac Levitan, the Russian Impressionist master and friend of Chekhov. We all considered Levitan a great man, in those days, and I was fortunate enough to meet in Saint Petersburg several of his friends and patrons, as well as some friends of the painter Serov. I saw many of the works of these two Russian Impressionist masters in private collections. At that time, being a Jew, I needed a special permit to reside in the capital. As I had failed to obtain this permit, I lived there illegally and was unable to register as a student in the National Academy of Fine Arts. That is why I chose to study at the Free Academy, where I studied, among others, under Bakst and Roehrich. . . ."

"Roehrich subsequently emigrated to the United States, and I remember visiting, some twenty years ago, a Roehrich Institute in New York, on Riverside Drive. It was full of Roehrich landscapes, and some of them struck me as being pretty ghastly. The whole place reeked of theosophy, or was it anthroposophy . . . ?"

"But Roehrich had once been, in Russia, a very serious painter and a much respected innovator. It was indeed to Roehrich that Diaghilev gave the job of designing the original sets and costumes for Stravinsky's *Rites of Spring*. At that time, Bakst, Roehrich, and Benois were the leaders of a kind of Russian *Art Nouveau* or *Jugendstil*. They were trying to achieve a synthesis of new trends, which reached them mainly from Paris and from Vienna, and of certain

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elements of traditional Russian folk-art, especially the more exotic or oriental folk-art of Southern Russia and of the Caucasus. But Bakst and his friends remained, on the whole, true to a very aristocratic and elegant, even somewhat decadent, conception of art, whereas Levitan and Riepin advocated a kind of Populist art that had some socialist implications, indeed a return to the earth and to the life of the Russian people. I myself felt attracted to this Populist Impressionism rather than to the pure Impressionism, after the manner of Sisley, of some Russian painters, such as Grabar, who had studied in Paris. Still, I always had my own notions about this Populism too. I have tried to remain in the general tradition of a certain kind of folk-art and, at the same time, of all great art that also appeals immediately to the less sophisticated, to the people. That is why, in Russia, I was a great admirer of the traditional art of the ikon-painters. There is often something quite magical and unreal about the plastic values and the colours of ikons. They suddenly light up before our eyes, in the darkness of a church, like flashes of lightning. One can well understand how it has been believed that some of these ancient ikons were not created by the hands of man but have appeared miraculously from heaven."

"So it was in Saint Petersburg that you experienced your first contacts with the modern art movement?"

"Yes, but I was also busy discovering some of the treasures of the city's museums. And it was in Saint Petersburg that I began painting my first series of self-portraits."

"I have had occasion to see recently one of these self-portraits that have now become so rare. It hangs in Oxford, in the home of one of my friends. To me, it has always seemed, in its composition and sombre colouring rather than in its actual texture, to be somewhat inspired by the early self-portraits of Rembrandt, perhaps because you depict yourself wearing a kind of beret, not unlike the one that Rembrandt wears in one of his self-portraits."

"How strange! I was very far, in those days, from thinking of Rembrandt. Most of the Russian painters whose work I knew were addicted to the colour-harmonies which you find so sombre. It was only later, when I came to Paris in 1910, that I learned at last, as so many other Russian painters and as Van Gogh had done too, to appreciate all the wonders of light and of colour."

"How did you manage your first trip to Paris?"

"Bakst had originally wanted me to take on the job of his assistant Anisfeld, who helped him paint the sets for Diaghilev's ballets and was then about to give up this job. I don't remember how it came about that this plan did not materialise and that I somehow failed to go to Paris with Bakst and the ballet company, but it was finally the lawyer Vinaver, who was also a member of the Russian Parliament or Duma, who offered me the money for my first trip. Vinaver had been, ever since my arrival in Saint Petersburg, my first and most faithful patron. He had several of my paintings in his collection, where I was very proud to see them hang close to works by Levitan and by Serov. It was Vinaver who, one day, suddenly offered to pay my trip to Paris and to transfer to me there, each month, a sum of forty roubles, which I would be able to collect from the Crédit Lyonnais. So I left Russia all alone, and full of misgivings. I was already in love, in those days, with Bella, who lived with her parents in Vitebsk. But her family felt that I was too poor to be considered a desirable son-in-law, and even the German frontier officials, when they boarded our train to inspect our passports and our baggage, viewed me suspiciously and asked me: *'Haben Sie Läuser?'*"

"What were your first impressions of Paris?"

"I seemed to be discovering light, colour, freedom, the sun, the joy of living, for the first time. It was from then on that I was at last able to express, in my work, some of the more elegiac or moon-struck joy that I had sometimes experienced in Russia too, the joy that once in a while expresses itself in a few of my childhood memories of Vitebsk. But I had never wanted to paint like any other painter. I had always dreamed of some new kind of art that would be different. In Paris, I now had the vision of the art that I actually wanted to create, in fact an intuition of a kind of new psychic dimension in my painting. Not that I was seeking a new means of expression, in a kind of basically Latin Expressionism like that of a Courbet. No, my art has never been an art of mere self-expression, nor an art that relies on literary content. On the contrary, it has always been something essentially constructed, in fact a world of forms."

"Is that why you immediately associated with the Paris Cubists?"

"No, the experiments of the Cubists never interested me very deeply. To me, they seemed to be reducing everything that they depicted to a mere geometry which remained a new slavery, whereas I was seeking a true liberation, not a liberation of the imagination or the fantasy alone, but a liberation of form too. If, in one of my pictures, I place a cow on a roof, or a tiny little woman in the middle of the body of a

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much larger one, all this is anything but literary content. On the contrary, it all seeks to illustrate a logic of the illogical, a world of forms that are *other*, a kind of composition that adds a psychic dimension to the various formulas which the Impressionists and then the Cubists had tried."

"André Breton and the Surrealists have often claimed that you were ten years ahead of their movement and had, as early as 1912, begun to obey the dictates of a kind of automatic painting such as they advocated around 1928 in their earliest manifestos."

"No, this argument is entirely unfounded. On the contrary, I always seek very consciously to construct a world where a tree can be quite different, where I myself may well discover suddenly that my right hand has seven fingers whereas my left hand has only five. Indeed, a world where everything and anything is possible and where there is no longer any reason to be at all surprised, or rather not to be surprised by all that one discovers there."

"One of my friends, the Israeli art-critic Haim Gamzou, claims that you are the Breughel of Yiddish idiom and folklore, and that he has himself identified over a hundred illustrations of popular Yiddish idioms and proverbs in details of your works."

"But I have never set about consciously illustrating these idioms and proverbs as Breughel once did, nor have I ever systematically composed a painting in which every detail illustrates a different proverb. All the idioms and proverbs that I may have illustrated have actually become popular because thousands of ordinary men and women have used them day by day, as I too have done, to express their thoughts. If a carter uses these metaphors and similes, there is nothing literary about his language. And if I, the son of a humble worker of the Vitebsk ghetto, also use them, this is still no reason to argue that my art is literary. Does the mere fact that I have become an artist make my work literary as soon as I express myself, perhaps unconsciously, as did all those who surrounded me in my childhood?"

"And what do you think of all those critics who claim that they have detected in your works the influence of Hassidic mysticism?"

"It is true that all my family belonged to a Hassidic community and that we had even had, in Vitebsk, a famous Hassidic *Wunderrebbe*, a miraculous Rabbi. But I doubt whether anyone can reasonably pretend that my work is essentially an expression of mystical faith or of religious belief. Mysticism and religion, of course, still played an important part in the world of my childhood, and they have left their mark in the work of my mature years too, as much as any other element of the life of the ghetto of Vitebsk. But I have now discovered other worlds too, and other beliefs and disbeliefs. . . ."

"What artistic circles did you choose to frequent when you first came to live in Paris?"

"One of my earliest and closest friends was the poet Blaise Cendrars. With Guillaume Apollinaire, the poet and leading theorist of the Cubists, I was much less at ease, though he was always very friendly and helpful. In those days, I had a studio in La Ruche, that legendary colony of broken-down studios where so many famous artists have lived. Modigliani was one of my neighbours. He was then doing more sculpture than painting. I think I was the only Russian painter there. Soutine moved in later. When I was preparing, in 1914, to go back to Russia, via Berlin, Soutine came one day to ask me if I would allow him to rent my studio as a sub-tenant while I was away."

"Was Soutine already as odd, as uncommunicative, and as careless of his appearance as he has generally been described?"

"I always found poor Soutine rather pitiful. Anyhow, I was not prepared to sub-let my studio to anyone and, the day I left for Berlin, I tied the door up with a rope, like a parcel, as it had no lock. I had no idea, at the time, that I would see La Ruche again only in 1922."

"What had made you decide to go to Berlin in 1914, just before the outbreak of the First World War?"

"Apollinaire had mentioned my work several times to Herwarth Walden, the organiser of Berlin's Sturm Gallery shows. Walden often came to Paris, in those years, to pick new talents whom he could exhibit in Germany. The German poet Ludwig Rubiner, and his wife Frieda, had also recommended me to Walden. The Rubiners, who were wonderful and devoted friends, were then as frequently in Paris as in Berlin, and many Paris artists owed their German successes to the Rubiners, who were indefatigable propagandists for modern art. Well, one day Walden asked me to let him have some hundred and fifty oils and gouaches of mine. I had already exhibited once in Berlin, in the 1913 Herbstsalon, where the collector Bernhard Keller had purchased my *Golgotha* that now hangs in the New York Museum of Modern Art. So I went to Berlin, in 1914, to take a look at my exhibition in Walden's Sturm Gallery. Actually, I stopped in Berlin only a few days, on my way back to Russia, where I planned to see Bella again and hoped to persuade her family to allow her to marry me and to return with me to Paris. We would then have stopped again in Berlin, on the way back, to collect the money that

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Walden might have obtained for me as a result of sales from my exhibition. But war was declared, and I was able to return to Berlin, and on to Paris, only in 1922, after the Russian Revolution. By that time, Walden had already sold all of my hundred and fifty paintings, but the currency inflation was raging in defeated Germany and the money that Walden had obtained for my work was no longer worth a cent."

"So this was the second time that you had seen all your work of a whole period sold without your being able to collect any money for it. If I remember right, many of the works that Walden had sold for you are now in important public and private collections. I saw some of them in Amsterdam, among those that the Stedelijk Museum exhibits in a whole room of your works."

"Yes, but the Stedelijk also owns many of my works that come from other sources. Besides, a third unpleasant surprise of this kind awaited me in 1922, when I returned to Paris and tried to go back to my studio in La Ruche. I expected to find it exactly as I had left it, but with the dust of nearly a decade accumulated on all my pictures and other possessions. Instead, I was greeted by new tenants. In my absence, all my belongings and my works had been moved out and sold, and I was never able to salvage anything."

"In a B.B.C. talk that was reprinted in The Listener, *Manya Harari reported, on her return from a trip to Moscow a couple of years ago, that she had still been able to see there quite a number of works which you had painted in Russia between 1914 and 1922. During those years of war and of Revolution, were you able to concentrate much on painting?"*

"Oddly enough, those years were among the most productive of my whole career. On my return from Paris, I found the atmosphere in Russia much more encouraging than before 1910, especially in certain Jewish circles that I had known before my first trip to Paris. Collectors had become far more open-minded, and there were more of them too. In Moscow, I also met at that time an outstanding and very successful engineer, Kagan Chabchay, who bought some thirty paintings of mine, which he planned to donate, with works by other artists too, to a Jewish Museum that he was sponsoring. But the Revolution came before this project had materialised, and Kagan Chabchay, in 1922, still owned all his private collection, which had not yet been nationalised. He then allowed me to bring back to Paris, so as to exhibit them there, all the paintings he had purchased from me."

"Three of those pictures from the former Kagan Chabchay collection came up for sale, on 3rd December last, in the Paris Salle Drouot. It appears that they have a somewhat curious history."

"Yes. On my return to Paris, in 1922, Kagan Chabchay's refugee relatives claimed that he had authorised them to sell the paintings which he had loaned to me, in order to raise money for themselves. So I allowed them to go ahead with these sales, until the Soviet authorities intervened and seized the last three pictures to sell them, it seems, on behalf of other heirs, who had remained in Russia, since Kagan Chabchay had meanwhile died. These three pictures, as a consequence of litigation that was delayed by the Second World War, remained impounded by the Court for close on twenty years."

"And when they were at last sold in Paris a few weeks ago, the heirs, whether the money went to those who had emigrated or in theory to those who had remained in Russia, obtained some twelve million francs."

"I had sold them originally to Kagan Chabchay for a sum that would amount to a few thousand francs to-day."

"Manya Harari also reports that she met in Moscow a private collector who owns, even to-day, some thirty of your works, which he has managed to purchase more or less secretly in recent years."

"That is quite possible. I left many works in Russia, most of them in the homes of friends who generally owned small collections that were not nationalised. Many of these collectors or their heirs, I suppose, subsequently sold these paintings on the free market, which is a kind of flea-market in Soviet Russia."

"But your own work has not always been banned in Soviet Russia and, if I remember right, you even enjoyed some official support during the earlier years of the Revolution."

"Yes, I enjoyed the patronage of Lunacharsky, who was the first Soviet Commissar for Education. It was he who nominated me local Commissar for Fine Arts in my native city, in Vitebsk. I was then responsible for all artistic activities in that region, and was thus able to provide Vitebsk with what I had missed there twenty years earlier, I mean a real Fine Arts Academy and a Museum."

"Were you able to attract to Vitebsk many of your fellow-artists from Moscow and Leningrad?"

"It was fairly easy, and nearly all those whom I approached accepted to come. Food supplies were far more plentiful in Vitebsk than in

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bigger cities, and I also offered all artists complete freedom. The faculty of my Academy thus acquired many of the great names of the Russian artistic avant-garde. Nearly all schools of modern art were represented there, from Impressionism through to Suprematism."

"But did all these artists representing such different trends co-operate harmoniously in your Vitebsk Academy?"

"On the contrary, our Academy very soon became a veritable hot-bed of intrigue. To begin with, my old friend Pen, who had been my first instructor, was mortally offended because I had neglected to offer him immediately an important position on the faculty. But I was anxious to avoid introducing, at the very start, too academic an element in our teaching. Pen got his revenge by painting a parody of a famous picture of the German Symbolist Arnold Boecklin, the author of the *Isle of the Dead*. In this parody, Pen depicted himself on his death-bed, and gave the devil who had come to fetch his soul a face that was quite recognisably mine. Later, I asked Pen to join our faculty too. But it was with the Suprematists that I had the greatest trouble."

"Was the founder of the Suprematist school, Casimir Malevich, also on your faculty?"

"Yes. At that time, the Constructivists had not yet broken away from the Suprematists, and I had both Malevich and El Lissitzky on the Vitebsk faculty. Even Pougny, who was also a Constructivist before he emigrated to Paris, was there with his wife: they both taught courses in applied art. But Malevich was still the leader of this whole group. He had started painting as an Impressionist, until 1905, and had then been one of the first Russian Fauvists. It was Lissitzky, among the Suprematists, who gave me the most trouble. At that time, he was still relatively unknown and, before committing himself exclusively to Suprematism and later to Constructivism, had first attracted the attention of several of my own patrons by handling Jewish themes in a style that was not unlike my own."

"Some of Lissitzky's early works on Jewish themes turn up even to-day in German auctions and, because they are so much like early works of your own and are likewise signed, as you did too at one time, in Hebrew script, are usually listed in German auction catalogues under your name."

"I suppose there are no longer many art experts in Germany who can decipher Hebrew script. But Lissitzky and I were not the only artists in Russia to handle such themes and to sign our works, at that time, in Hebrew script. There was also Issachar Ryback, who died relatively young and has left us some very fine works. He was one of the most gifted in our group of artists who were then seeking to formulate a specifically Jewish style of art. In the early years of the Revolution, the various national groups in Soviet Russia were at first encouraged to develop schools of art of their own, and quite a number of Jewish artists thus happened to pursue, for a while, the same aims. It was thus with Ryback, Nathan Altman, Lissitzky, Rabinowitsch, and Tischler that I came to work in Moscow for the Jewish National Theatre, for the Habbimah, and for the Kamerny Theatre. But most of my theatrical designs were considered too fantastic for use on the stage, and Meyerhold, Tairoff, and Vachtangov never used them. Only Granowsky ever had the courage to use any of my designs. But I also painted some panels to decorate the foyer of the Jewish National Theatre in Moscow."

"One of my American friends who was in Moscow last summer tells me that this Theatre still owns your paintings, but that they are now stored away in the basement and are shown only to foreigners and on request. But how did you manage to find time to found and direct your academy and museum in Vitebsk and to work concurrently for the theatre in Moscow?"

"Well, as they say in Yiddish, you can't be dancing at two weddings at the same time, and I could scarcely be both in Vitebsk and Moscow. As long as I was director of the Academy, I had little spare time to paint. At all times, I was busy raising funds to meet our expenses, scaring up supplies of every kind, or visiting the military authorities to obtain deferments for teachers or pupils. So I came and went, inspected all schools in the province where art-classes were taught, and was constantly being called to Moscow for conferences with the central authorities there. While I was away from Vitebsk, Impressionists and Cubists, Cézannians and Suprematists, whether on the faculty or among the students, used to engage in a kind of free-for-all behind my back. One day, when I returned to Vitebsk from Moscow, I found, across the façade of the school building, a huge sign: Suprematist Academy. Malevich and his henchmen had simply fired all the other members of the faculty and taken over the whole Academy. I was furious, handed in my resignation at once and set out again for Moscow, in a cattle-car, as the railroads had no other rolling-stock available at that time even for travellers on official business."

"But surely your friends in Moscow refused to accept your resignation?"

"On the contrary, when I called at the Ministry of the Commissar for Education, I was told I had already been fired. A whole file of de-

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nunciations and affidavits was produced, and I was told that some of the Suprematists had accused me of being authoritarian, unco-operative, and a whole lot of other things. Reports of all this reached Vitebsk, and the students staged a protest as a result of which I was reinstated, though not for very long. My Suprematist colleagues continued to intrigue against me and I then arranged to move to Moscow, where I began to free-lance, working mainly for the Jewish Theatre until I returned to Berlin and Paris in 1922. Not only did I then have more time to paint, but I even managed in Moscow to write my book *Ma Vie*, which was subsequently published in Paris. I had chosen to live in France because I have always felt that France is my real home, because only in France, and especially in Paris, do I feel truly free as a painter of light, and of colour. I have already stated to you that Russian painters, in my opinion, have but rarely managed to develop a real sense of colour in their own country."

"Yet all of Paris and of Western Europe had raved about Bakst's sense of colour, before the First World War, and about the brilliance of the sets and costumes of Diaghilev's Russian ballets."

"True, but Bakst and the other artists who worked for Diaghilev had all studied in Paris or been pupils of Russian painters who had returned to their native land after studying with the great French Impressionists. Besides, there is a difference between the use of colour in the applied arts, especially on the stage, and in an easel-painting. The light, in a theatre, is not of the same kind as the light that we find in nature, or in a room where a picture hangs on a wall: and that is why an artist who works for the stage can allow himself more violent contrasts of colour than on a canvas, where there is no movement of actors or of dancers to relieve the tension of these contrasts, and no spotlights to stress suddenly a detail while leaving the rest, for the time being, in shadow. A canvas indeed requires a kind of harmony of light and of colour, a more integrated unity than that of a stage-set. Now that I am working on the designs for a new production of Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloë* ballet, I find myself constantly concerned with these problems."

"On your return to Paris you surely found it difficult, at first, to integrate yourself again in the Paris art-world?"

"Perhaps.... But I did not come directly from Moscow to Paris. Instead, I stopped for a while in Berlin, where I found myself, in those difficult years of inflation and of the birth-pangs of the Weimar Republic, in an atmosphere that was not unlike that of the early years of the Russian Revolution. Besides, I met in Berlin a number of Russian friends, from Leningrad, Moscow, and even Vitebsk, who had likewise emigrated, if only for a while. Berlin had become, right after the First World War, a kind of clearing-house of ideas where one met all those who came and went from Moscow to Paris and back. Later, I found for a short while a similar atmosphere on the Paris Left Bank, in Montparnasse, then again in New York during the Second World War. But in 1922, Berlin was like a weird dream, sometimes like a nightmare. Everybody seemed to be busy buying or selling something, and even when a loaf of bread cost several million marks, one found patrons to buy pictures for several thousand million marks which one had to spend again the same day, in case they might become valueless overnight. In apartments around the Bayrischer Platz, one could find as many theosophical or Tolstoian Russian countesses talking and smoking all night around a samovar as there had ever been in Moscow, and in the basements of some restaurants in the Motzstrasse there were as many Russian generals and colonels, all cooking or washing dishes, as in a fair-sized Tsarist garrison-town. Never in my life have I met as many miraculous Hassidic Rabbis as in inflationary Berlin, or such crowds of Constructivists as at the Romanische Kaffee.

"When I was a refugee in New York during the Second World War, I often thought of all those whom I had known in Vitebsk, in Saint Petersburg, in Moscow, in Paris, and in Berlin, all those who had been less fortunate than I and who had not escaped from the horrors of persecution and of war."

*

AT THIS point, Madame Chagall interrupted our conversation, reminding the master that he had an appointment with the dentist. With the agility and speed of an acrobat, he leapt from the couch and prepared to leave. When Madame Chagall asked him, as he slipped into his jacket, whether he had enough money on him to pay his cab-fares, he suddenly became a clown, felt all his pockets and replied: "Yes, yes, but where are my teeth?" Then feeling his jaw, he added: "Oh, they are still there!" In a twinkling he was gone.

Two days later, I returned, to submit to Chagall the first draft of my manuscript and check with him the many dates and details that I had hurriedly noted as he spoke. When he had approved the whole interview, he concluded: "The poet Mayakowsky used to say to me in Moscow: 'My dear Chagall, you're a good fellow, but you talk too much.' I see that I have not improved with age...."

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J. P. Mayer

Tocqueville's Travel Diaries

"So many of my thoughts and feelings are shared by the English, that England has turned into a second native land of the mind for me."
Tocqueville to Nassau Senior (27th July, 1851).

"To tell the truth I haven't written a word of the book itself. But I have worked at it a lot. I think about it every day and all day. I will explain the very odd way I work at it; in a notebook I put down day by day how the novel stands in my mind; yes, it is a sort of diary I keep, as one might keep one about a child.... Instead of concentrating on the solution of each difficulty as it turns up, I take each difficulty (the structure of every work of art is entirely built up out of the solutions of a heap of tiny difficulties as they come along), I take each of these difficulties and define and study it. You could call the notebook a continuous criticism of my novel; or better, of all novels. Think how interesting we should find such a notebook kept by Dickens or Balzac; if we had the diary of 'l'Education sentimentale' *or* 'The Brothers Karamazov,' *the story of the work, of its gestation! But that would be thrilling... more absorbing than the book itself...."*

André Gide, "Les Faux-Monnayeurs."

IT IS possible now to appreciate the influence of his travels on Alexis de Tocqueville's political and sociological thought.* What he saw of peoples and their institutions gave birth to his books and his whole political activity. So his travel diaries deserve an important place among his works. As Aristotle wrote at the end of the classical period of Greece, as Bodin thought out his "Republic" at the beginning of the modern age, as Montesquieu published "L'Esprit des Lois" in the last decades of absolute monarchy in France, so, too, did Tocqueville work out his political philosophy in a time of change. It was the time when the results of 19th-century industrialisation were beginning to show; social classes, states, and the whole of human existence were being remoulded in a huge crucible. A new world was coming to birth in America. Reform had begun in England. That is what makes the diaries so intensely interesting. We travel in the company of a subtle and profound thinker who is trying to understand the new social structures that are beginning to take shape. We know now what our own have turned into and that makes us feel at home in Tocqueville's world. We feel that Tocqueville lives in today's world, not because we have found him again, but because his problems have become our problems.

He was twenty-two when he went to Sicily with his brother Edouard. But the travel notes of that journey already show the characteristic way of working which he developed on his later travels. His social theories are based on observed facts and always have a bearing on political action.

Three years later he started on his journey to America. This time Gustave de Beaumont was his companion. They arrived at New York on 10th May, 1831. They stayed in the United States until 20th February, 1832. The first part of their time was taken up by the official mission which had given the pretext for their journey, that is to say, the study of the penitentiary system in the United States.

Tocqueville got deeper and deeper into the study of American political and social institutions. The two friends visited the New Eng-

* Cf. my edition of Tocqueville's work in French: *Œuvres Complètes*, V, 1. An English edition is in preparation, to be published by Faber.

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land States of which, as Beaumont puts it, "Boston is the head." But they also went to the very limits of settlements in the West; "A Fortnight in the Wilderness," and "A Journey to Lake Oneida," breathe the air of those parts. The travellers faced all the trials of a strenuous journey from Quebec to New Orleans.

Anyone who wants to follow their journey reconstructed day by day will find it all in George Wilson Pierson's authoritative *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* which has made it possible to get the fourteen travel notebooks on America in the right order.

That is how it comes to be possible to watch the birth-pangs of *Democracy in America.* There is no other book in the long history of political thought which gives us the same opportunity of following very closely a great thinker's process of work, except perhaps for the case of Montesquieu whose influence on Tocqueville was profound.

MANY people may feel that these unpublished pages gives a fresher and more attractive view of Tocqueville's social and political philosophy than does the finished work. Here are some instances. After a conversation with Mr. Quincy, President of Harvard, Tocqueville notes:

"One of the happiest results of lack of government (when a people is in the lucky, but rare, position of being able to do without it) is invariably a strong development of individual personality. Each man learns to think and act on his own, not counting on the support of an outside power which, however watchful it may be, can never take thought for every need of society.... I admit that often a man actually achieves less than a central authority could have done for him, but the sum total of all individual enterprises taken together is a great deal more than any administration could undertake; besides such a state of affairs has such a good influence on public morality that that alone would more than make up for any disadvantages there might be. But, I must say it again, very few peoples can do without government in that way. Such a state of affairs has only ever existed at the two extremes of civilisation. The savage, with only his physical needs to satisfy, relies on himself alone. A civilised man can only do the same if he has reached such an enlightened social state that he knows what is useful to do and his passions do not stop him from doing it. The chief care of a good government should be to teach people little by little to do without it." (20th September, 1831.)

That is typical of the liberal outlook of the young Tocqueville. A few days later he summarises a conversation with Jared Sparks:

"The political dogma of this country is that the majority is always right. By and large we are very glad we have adopted it, but one cannot deny that experience often gives the lie to the principle.... Sometimes the majority has wished to oppress the minority...." (29th September, 1831.)

That is the germ of the great chapter of *Democracy in America* dealing with the tyranny of the majority.

One finds other inspired sketches for chapters of the book. But that is not all. Some of the young Tocqueville's observations—for example, the comparison between customary and written law, or the sketch for a history of English law—stand out against the background formed by the legal institutions of the Continent, and prove that Tocqueville's juridical sociology ranks in the same high class as his works on political sociology. These observations and many others are real sociological discoveries; I will just quote here some characteristic passages from the notebooks:

"Offspring of the Barbarians, customary law has all the imperfections of the civilisation that brought it into being, but it breathes the independence of the centuries in which it flourished. If one has to choose now between it and written law, one can only turn it down. But its abolition on the Continent of Europe has been a great misfortune. Whereas, I think, its maintenance in England has had a particularly marked effect in supporting conceptions and principles of liberty, and so, in that indirect way, in spite of its imperfections, has aided the progress of civilisation in that island; contrariwise, the introduction of written law on the Continent, albeit as law it is more complete, more supple, and more civilised, if one can put it so, has helped to establish despotism in Europe, and, as a result, has harmed the very cause of civilisation which it seemed to serve.

"Quite apart from the political consequences

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to be traced from the preservation of customary law in England, I think its existence has notably helped to give a certain turn to English ways of thinking. It has given that nation what one might call its taste for precedents, that is to say, a certain turn of mind which leads men to try and find out not what is reasonable in itself, but what is done, not what is just, but ancient, not general theories, but particular facts. I have no doubt that habits bred from customary law, and the part that lawyers and judges have, in all ages, taken in political arguments, have proved strong allies of aristocratic institutions, and moreover have greatly helped to give the English that superstitious respect for the works of their fathers, and that hatred of innovation, which are peculiar to them."

Tocqueville was twenty-six years old when he wrote that and had never set foot in England. A deep natural affinity enabled him to understand the English turn of mind.

On 5th November, 1831, Tocqueville notes at the end of an interview with Charles Caroll:

"All the ways of his being and the turn of his mind make Charles Caroll the exact counterpart of a European gentleman. Probably the great Southern landowners at the time of the Revolution were all of such sort. That breed of men which provided the greatest names in America, is disappearing. With them the tradition of cultivated manners is going. The people become educated, knowledge spreads, and middling ability becomes common. Outstanding talents and great personalities are rare. Society is less brilliant and more prosperous. The various effects of the progress of civilisation and enlightenment, about which only Europe is in doubt, can be seen as clear as day in America. What is the basic reason for this? I cannot see it clearly yet."

The notion of the mass era can already be seen in that passage; "the age of facile achievements," as Goethe said, Goethe whose prophetic eyes were not yet shut when Tocqueville wrote those words.

Later in another fragment Tocqueville comes back to the same problem:

"Why, as civilisation spreads, do outstanding men become fewer? Why, when knowledge is accessible to all, are great talents rare? Why, when there are no lower classes, are there no upper classes either? Why, when understanding of government reaches the masses, is there a shortage of great spirits to take the lead in society? America clearly raises those questions. But who can answer them?"

These two passages are plain proof of the penetrating restlessness of Tocqueville's thought. He is passionately seeking for the institutional means which could allow human liberty to be preserved.

"Imagine," he writes, "a people not entirely accustomed to the rule of law and the reign of persuasion, give it passions and great political interests; let it have, beside the majority which makes the laws, a minority which only takes note of those who consider the laws and stop at the point of action, and look what will become of public order. Don't you see that in the minds of all men there is but a step, and the easiest of steps to take, between showing that a thing is good and carrying it out? Moreover, there are some occasions when the majority is so uncertain that either side can claim to be the majority."

Four more extracts may help to show the importance of these new manuscripts for Tocqueville's sociological thought. The first two are dated 30th September, 1831:

"Two fundamental social assumptions seem to control American society, and one must always refer back to them to find the reason for any of the laws or customs which prevail among them. They are:

"First. The majority may make mistakes about some little things, but by and large it is always right and there is no moral power higher than it.

"Second. Every individual, private person, society, village, or nation, is the only lawful judge of its own interests, and so long as it does not harm anyone else's concerns, no one has a right to meddle. That is a point which one should always keep in mind."

Indeed the first two volumes of *Democracy in America* are chiefly concerned with the elaboration of these two assumptions which could even serve as texts for them. But the following comment which bears the same date, is to the point:

"A completely democratic government is something so dangerous that, even in America, they have felt it necessary to take a great many precautions against the mistakes and passions of democracy. The two Houses, the Governors' veto, and above all the Judges. . . ."

That "above all" is important; chapter VIII of the second part of *Democracy in America*

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contains a masterly exposition of the sense of law in the United States and how it serves as countervailing force against the power of democracy.

"Another assumption," Tocqueville continues, "of American society, which one must always keep in mind is this; since every individual is the best judge of his own interest, society must not guard him too carefully, lest he should come to rely on it and so saddle society with a task it cannot perform."

That is a far-sighted comment. A hundred and twenty years later, are not modern States still looking for the happy mean between the needs of the individual (if there are any such left!) and society?

TOCQUEVILLE left New York for Havre on the 20th February, 1832. He had stayed a little more than nine months in the United States. Back in France he and Beaumont wrote *The Penitentiary System* and, that task accomplished, he started putting his notes in order and began writing *Democracy in America*. But before putting the finishing touches to that work, he decided to visit England. He had private reasons, too, for visiting the United Kingdom. For he had become attached to Mary Motley, an English middle-class girl of no fortune, whom he had met at Versailles in 1828, and no doubt felt in 1833 that it would be well to make the acquaintance of her family in England. He married Mary Motley in 1836. But that private reason apart, while working on *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville probably felt that he could not fully understand American political and social institutions without some study of British political machinery. He stayed for five weeks. In coming to England he was following the example of Duvergier de Hauranne, Charles de Rémusat, August Blanqui, and others: since Voltaire and Montesquieu, thoughtful Frenchmen had always been interested in English political institutions.

It was the England of the first "Reform Bill," which had become law on the 7th June, 1832. The age of democracy had begun. Nassau Senior, the well-known economist, describes how Tocqueville came to see him in 1833 saying, "I am Alexis de Tocqueville and have come to make your acquaintance." He visited the House of Commons, as Montesquieu had done, attended political and election meetings, and watched the proceedings of a magistrates' court where Lord Radnor was a Justice of the Peace. He went to Oxford and noted the importance of that ancient university as a recruiting ground for the English political élite.

After this general survey of English political and social life, Tocqueville made a sketch of the political sociology of the country. Here are some outstanding points:

"Decentralisation, like liberty, is something which the leaders of the people always promise and never give. To get it and to keep it the people must rely on its own efforts, and, if they have not the taste for it, there is no cure for the ill."

The close connection between centralisation, decentralisation, and liberty is for Tocqueville the crucial question. All his works turn on that. Already in 1833 he had seen that the English aristocracy was open to recruits.

"The difference between France and England in this matter is clear from the use of one word in each language; 'gentleman' and 'gentilhomme' have the same origin; but 'gentleman' in English applies to any well-educated man, regardless of birth, whereas in France 'gentilhomme' can only be used of a noble by birth. The meaning of these two words of common derivation has been so changed by the different social climate of the peoples, that they are quite untranslatable, at least without recourse to a periphrasis. This grammatical observation is more illuminating than the longest argument.... The English aristocracy has a hand in everything; it is open to all; and anyone who wished to abolish it or attack it as a body, would find it very hard to define the object of his onslaught...."

Nevertheless, Tocqueville thought one could say that the English aristocracy was daily losing some of the scope of its power.

"The immediate future of European society," Tocqueville continues (and one sees how his thought has developed since his return from America), "lies with democracy.... In England the people are beginning to get the idea that they, too, could take part in government. So the

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gradual development of democratic principles must follow the irresistible march of events. Daily some new privilege of the aristocracy comes under attack. It is a slow war waged against one little point after another, but in time it will certainly bring the whole edifice down."

From what he could learn from his radical friends, or observe himself of the political and social tensions of England in 1833, he said that a violent revolution was

"something possible but not probable... if things follow their natural course, I don't think there will be a revolution, and I see a good chance for the English to succeed in modifying the social and political set-up, with sharp growing pains, no doubt, but without convulsions, and without civil war."

Again time has proved his judgment sound.

EIGHTEEN months later—from May to September, 1835—Tocqueville paid his second visit to England. He was no longer an unknown official, but the famous author of *Democracy in America*. His circle of friends had grown much larger: to Senior, Lord Radnor, and Roebuck were added John Stuart Mill and, most important, his devoted translator, Henry Reeve. He met the historian, George Grote, who was a member of the Commission on Electoral Corruption. Tocqueville was invited to give evidence before that Parliamentary Commission. Lady Holland gave him the entrée to her salon, a brilliant centre of London political society, and he was received at Lansdowne House on the strength of a letter of introduction from Count Molé.

The groundwork of 1833 now leads to achievement. Tocqueville is more sure of himself. He is already struggling with the problems dealt with in the second two volumes of *Democracy in America* which, however, he was not to finish for another five years; it came out in 1840.

On the 11th May, Tocqueville comments on the English judicial system:

"The English are the first people who ever thought of centralising the administration of justice. This innovation, which dates from the Norman period, should be reckoned one of the reasons for the quicker progress that this nation has made in civilisation and liberty."

Elsewhere Tocqueville analyses "the spirit of association and the spirit of exclusion" which is probably the most characteristic (and the most puzzling) trait of the political animal in the British Isles.

"I can't completely understand how the 'spirit of association' and the 'spirit of exclusion' both came to be so highly developed in the same people, and often to be so intimately combined. Example, a club: what better example of association than the union of individuals who form the club? What more exclusive than the corporate personality represented by the club? The same applies to almost all civil and political associations, the corporations.... See how families divide up when the birds are able to leave the nest."

Perhaps Tocqueville might have carried the argument a little further. The adaptability of the spirit of association explains the simplicity of the English parliamentary system. There are so many clubs and other associations to deal with specific problems that the organised political parties can concentrate on big questions of national policy. Indeed, this strange combination of the spirit of association and the spirit of individualism nourishes and sustains the Englishman's political capacity.

At Manchester on the 3rd July, 1835, Tocqueville notes:

"There is a great deal of centralisation in England; but what is its distinctive feature? Legislation and not administration, government more than administration."

Elsewhere Tocqueville applies the lesson to be drawn from this comment to France.

"Impossibility of having an elected power working side by side with a nominated administrative power without recourse to the arbitration of the judicial power. What happens in France proves it. We are working either towards the complete independence or complete subordination of the provinces and the destruction of municipal life."

This is how he analyses the new Poor Law (14th August, 1834) and explains the political principles of English administration.

"Let us stop a moment," he writes, "to say a

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word about that organisation which is characteristic of the English race and which we will find again in almost all the institutions which it has brought into being in the new world.

"There are three elements there: (1) Choice of the executive power. (2) Election. (3) Control by the Judicial power. These three elements are combined so as to establish an administration which is active but not tyrannical."

Tocqueville's political thought always has political action in mind. A few years later he was to attempt to apply the lessons of his travels in the political arena.

But no one should imagine that in his admiration for the spirit of English politics Tocqueville forgot the social crisis caused by the rapid industrialisation of those years. His pages dealing with the poverty of the working classes in Manchester recall in style and in depth of analysis the remarks of La Bruyère on the condition of 17th-century peasants in *Les Caractères*. They herald Friedrich Engels' *Conditions of the Working Class in England* which was to inaugurate Marxism. Although Tocqueville had taken note of the social condition of the English working class, he doesn't seem to have known about Chartist activity in those years. On the other hand, Tocqueville was continually struck by the importance of the social rôle of wealth in England. He wrote from London to his fiancée: "The respect paid to wealth in England is enough to make one despair. . . ."*

In a note on a conversation with his friend Reeve, Tocqueville comes back to the problem of centralisation:

"Why," he asks, "is centralisation especially a habit of Democracy? That is a great question to explore in the third volume of my work, if I can fit it in there. Question of first importance. Centralisation, instinct of democracy, instinct of a society which has managed to escape from the individualistic system of the Middle Ages. Preparation for despotism."

That anticipates the fourth part of the second volume of *Democracy in America*, which is the culminating point of his sociological work. Did he mean to write a book about England? He did not, if we can trust what he wrote to Count Molé on his return to France, or perhaps rather he abandoned the idea of doing so:

"I agree with you, sir, that after a book which has had some success, one should not be in a hurry to take up the pen again. So I never intended when I went to England (whatever my publisher may have said without my knowledge in the 'Journal des Débats') to collect the material for a new work. In undertaking that journey my only object was to regain my health, which was troubling me a little, and at the same time to give myself the intellectual pleasure of watching a great people in the throes of revolutionary change. That was the object, and that will be the result of my journey. I think in England I have picked up some ideas which, for me, are new, and may be useful later on; but I have never thought of writing a book about the country I hurried through. If the idea did enter my head as I started out, I have quite dropped it since my return. It would take a very fatuous philosopher to imagine that he could understand England in six months. A year has ever seemed to me too short a time for a proper appreciation of the United States, and it is infinitely easier to form clear ideas and precise conceptions about America than about Great Britain. In America all laws originate more or less from the same idea. The whole of society, so to say, is based on just one fact: everything follows from one underlying principle. One could compare America to a great forest cut through by a large number of roads which all end in the same place. Once you have found the central point, you can see the whole plan in one glance. But in England the roads cross, and you have to follow along each of them to get a clear idea of the whole."

That passage gives an excellent synthesis of the thoughts he was formulating in his mind during those two journeys.

In July and August, 1835, Tocqueville was in Ireland. Again he travelled with Gustave de Beaumont, who in 1839 published his book, *L'Irlande sociale, politique et religieuse*, whereas his friend's notes remained largely unpublished. Tocqueville does not hide his mistrust of the English aristocracy and the Anglican Church, which treated the Irish people as a nation of slaves. With patient understanding he disentangled Irish social and political institutions down to the smallest detail. He studied the land question.

* Quoted from an unpublished letter.

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He took into account the deep religious feeling of the Irish of that time. "It is the people," a priest told him, "that believe firmly in another world, because they are unhappy in this one." It is the poor who save the poor from dying of hunger in Ireland.

"What does the Lord do meanwhile?" Tocqueville writes, "he goes for walks in his huge domains surrounded by high walls. Within the park all is splendid; poverty groans without, but he does not see it; it is his doorman's job to keep the poor out of sight, but should he by chance meet a poor man, he answers his prayers by saying, 'I make it a duty not to encourage begging.' His dogs are large and fat and fellow beings die at his door. Not only does he never help the poor in their need, he profits by their necessities to extract enormous rents and goes to France or Italy to spend the money he has so gained. If he comes back for a moment to visit us, it is in order to drive a poor man, who is behind with his rent, from his land and chase him out of his house. . . ."

Two other travel diaries deserve mention. His essay about Switzerland, written in 1836, is perhaps the least interesting. His notes about Algeria, almost entirely unpublished, show him writing with precision and energy as an active man of affairs. The Chamber of Deputies had instructed him to make a report on Algerian problems. One passage stands out as deserving special notice, that in which he speaks about the absence of clergy among the Moslems. In common with all the great sociologists—from Marx to Durkheim and Max Weber—Tocqueville shares an interest in the non-European world; it seems that only the understanding of social structures far different from our own has the power to show us to ourselves.

Julian Mitchell

At the Butcher's

In the shop, among raw carcasses
Swinging on snakes of steel,
In a dazzle of tins and aprons,
Sawdust scouring the floor,
A face pale as a candlelight
Smiles like a triste madonna,
Black eyebrows, logan-coloured lips
Moulded small and thin on the flesh,
A ghost of Italian melancholy,
Soft evening on the clear hills behind.

Who laid this tenderness here
In a family of coarse red cheeks,
Of fatness and butchers' subtlety?
A gossip-whispered never-mentioned story
Of lodger or rape? Some far-back blood
No one remembers? Or simply a stray mixture
Of English genes? Surrounded now by bones,
Whitewash, blood, refrigerators,
Whatever it was wraps up raw meat,
And smiles a pale smile, and hands the change.

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LETTER FROM BEIRUT

The Shaky Bridge

BEIRUT Airport is something acceptable for the visitor to photograph: there is nothing old-fashioned about it. And its majuscule WELCOME TO LEBANON! tells in three languages an ambiguous truth. What better symbol for Lebanon? The Cedar, chosen as the national emblem, is as relevant to modern Beirut as the maypole to London. A church is at once contradicted by a mosque; a bus with "Ya Allah!" in red letters on its front is followed by another with Notre Dame de Lourdes in blue; a jowly Lebanese merchant contrasts with a lean-faced shepherd in baggy black trousers; the boasts of a literacy rate higher than Italy's consorts ill with the whining beggar children permitted to run after sailors in the Bourj. But about the Welcome sign there is no doubt. Anything, and anyone, is welcome to Beirut. Folk dancers from Moscow thump the UNESCO stage with disciplined verve; American ballet may fill fewer seats, but there is nothing small about the sum being offered to bring Bill Haley (not of *The Times*) to the Alumni Club of the American University. In the bookshops, ENCOUNTER shares a socket with *Soviet Literature*; *Paris Match* and *Muscle Power* droop together outside the shrines of Cinemascope. Mr. Gerald Harding lectures on the Scrolls. Men change every currency in barlit booths; women change into every costume for the noisy cabarets.

The quality of the Welcome can vary. It can be the dollar-hungry grimace of the flash hotel, where bellboys, as in other places, push part of the confusing change under a napkin, and hope you won't notice; it can be the sincerity of mountain inns, where the Druzi landlord will sit with you over coffee, the lights of the Mediterranean coast twinkling ten miles below. His bill may be as little as a pound a day for a room with a balcony and bath: there is the sound of cicadas, and the scent of pines.

The ambiguity in the symbol is not in the welcome, but in the destination. What is Lebanon, to which the stewardess ushers you, through the marble halls of the photogenic airport? Physically, a double range of mountains with the Bekaa valley sloping between, and to the west, a narrow coastal plain between Israel and Syria. The physique is beautiful: abrupt mountains enclose the valley where the Adonis bursts from a gigantic cave under a high cliff; in the elegiac Bekaa the Temple of Jupiter at Baalbek looks best under snow. Though even smaller than Israel, Lebanon has as many contradictions, and as many aspirations. Her conflicts may be set in a minor key; but they are as profound. For Lebanon is soul, as well as flesh, and conflict enters with the soul.

IN HIS editorials in *Le Soir* M. Kesrouan Labaki makes great play with the concept *libanisme*. What this means it might not be easy for M. Labaki to explain precisely. It is very different from the *aroubah* (or arabism) of Cairo; it certainly consists as much in being against certain things, as in favour of others; and to state these openly in a country where politics are still based, as President Chamoun admits, on "confessional" rather than "party political" divisions, would be perilous. A favourite, because innocuous, slogan is that Lebanon bridges the West and the East; that it interprets the West to the East, and the East to the West. From the way in which some *libanistes* write (in French, naturally), the rôle might more truthfully be described: to argue for the West, and to apologise for the East.

Le Soir, and the two other French-language dailies, speak for at least a section of Lebanese society: the Maronites, whose Christianity, uniate with Rome, has both preserved them as a group, differing from other Lebanese as German Jews from Yemeni, and at the same time, by putting them on the defensive, has inclined to make them aggressive too. Their name for France, *umm al hanouné*, the cherishing mother, is not a tactful one; they use French names for Christian saints, such as Joseph, Antoine, or Marie, in this contrasting with the Orthodox, whose Christianity and names are content to remain of the East.

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Living among Maronites, one might imagine that the Christian religion had started on the Seine. The town where I live, Junie, is all Maronite; it is on the most beautiful bay in Lebanon. Church bells ring from the numerous churches more frequently than I remember them in Oxford, and high on the crest of the ridge, above the upcurling town of gardens and stone-built houses, a concrete basilica is being built to Notre Dame du Liban, whose vast statue stands nearby on a white ziggurat. My second day in our house, which we rent from the Consul of Panama, a bearded priest knocked at our door; with him was a blue-chinned acolyte in a trilby bearing what looked like an ice-bucket. In fact, it was Holy Water to asperse the house, and this was done, in stole and biretta; the words of the prayers were in Syriac, an obsolete dialect used by the Maronites in church.

It is said that the most important power of the Maronites (which keeps them the dominant sect) is the power not to hold a census. If a census were held, the population figures might make it difficult for them to go on assuming the rights as well as the powers of a majority. The challenge might also force them to work out a more durable relationship with their fellow-countrymen.

But without the census, there is an unwritten rule that the President of the Republic must be a Maronite, and the Prime Minister must be a Sunni Moslem. Other Cabinet posts are awarded to Shia Moslems, Orthodox Christians, and Druzes. The Presidential term is six years, though Beshara al Khoury, the first holder of the office, was forced to resign before his term was up.

To the Maronites, *libanisme* is an agile balance between the West, which supports them, and the East, with whom they trade. (Most of Lebanon's tourists come from Egypt, Kuwait, Arabia, or Iraq.) The West used to mean France: the Maronites relied on Paris, and Paris relied on them. But either judging them insufficiently powerful, or no longer sufficiently compliant (Maronites such as Bechara al Khoury played a prominent rôle in the Independence Movement), the once cherishing mother has given her favours to another power in the Near East. In reply, the Maronites are learning English. A bar in the main square, the Bourj, displays a notice: WE LIKE THE EISENHOWER DOCTRINE—WELCOME TO U.S. SAILORS. Mr. Charles Malik, the Foreign Minister, has similar sentiments. He is praised in American circles as a philosopher-statesman and friend of America. As a philosopher, Mr. Malik is a friend of abstract nouns, and seems as uncontaminated by logical positivism as by Communism. His opinion on how best to combat Communism in the Middle East has been briefly stated.* "By the development of strong, healthy governments and administrations. Then by paying much greater attention than before to the realm of ideas and attitudes. And only in the third place by turning to the whole problem of social and economic justice. It never does anybody any good to let things drift. The forces of freedom have drifted in the past in this area on these issues with dangerous results. I hope that they have put an end to this." This panacea leaves vague how the healthy administrations are to be formed; what ideas and attitudes are to have attention paid to them, and how; and who the forces of freedom are, who have drifted, and in what direction, is also imprecise.

THE welcome to America is not, however, entirely new. The American University of Beirut, a Protestant missionary foundation, occupies a splendid site on one side of the peninsular, which in antiquity supported the best law-school of the East. The campus has thrown out an American shell: the whole quarter of Ras Beirut, in which visiting teachers from Illinois, and their children, can feel at home. Coffee bars with such names as Uncle Sam or Merry Cream create an illusion that America is not far off; children with flaxen hair rollerskate in blue jeans; expensive apartment houses confront a Californian sea, and the tents of refugees are hidden by pines. Like all universities, the AUB has its academic enemies; and these allege that its scholarship is superficial, compared with that of the French University of St. Joseph, run by Jesuits. But nobody suggests that better than either is the National University, which is said to exist, but of which little is known.

Can this welcome to France, America, and even—with some doubts—to Mr. Shepilov, be said to compose *libanisme*?

Even among the *évolué* Maronites, as opposed to the *arriéré* Moslems (a favourite pair of participles), there is much that is genuinely of the East. Hospitality may not flourish as it does in Iraq or Syria; but is still more lavish, perhaps, than in Europe. French is written, Arabic is spoken. A friend of mine, Raoul, educated by the Jesuits, had long told me that at home his family spoke only French; and indeed his French was a great deal better than mine. One evening I was invited to dinner at his house in the mountains, forty minutes in an American car from the sticky July coast. We were greeted by his mother under the low-powered mountain chandelier. She was a tall, dignified, handsome woman.

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* In an interview with Rosemary Sayigh; *Middle East Forum*. Feb., 1957.

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"Bon soir, M'sieur, ana mutaassif kathir, walakin ma aaraf al lugha al fransiyya"... "I am sorry, but I do not speak French." And even the families shouting *Viens, Antoinette, va jouez, Pierre,* on the beach, soon break into Arabic when the foreigner seems engrossed in his magazine. And when Antoinette and Pierre return to the beach-hut for *déjeuner,* it is not to the kind of repast which a Parisian would expect.

But nevertheless, the doubt in the Christian Arab soul as to whether he is a Christian, and therefore inclined to the West, or an Arab, and therefore inclined to the East, is a continuing tension. In extreme cases it erupts into a clear-cut decision: either with such followers of Pierre Gemayel, leader *des Phalanges libanaises,* as secretly contemplate a kind of Christian Israel, or with those like the Oxford-educated Clovis Maqsoud, who discard sectarianism, and aim at a socialist Arab world where the first question asked will no longer be: what is his religion? Which is not to say that other questions, as sinister, might not still be put.

Split-mindedness of this kind is not found so often among the Moslems, most of whom are poorer than the Christians. Arabism has to them an appeal stronger than the smile, or the money, of Eisenhower. They paste portraits of President Nasser in their taxis, wear diminutive photographs of him on their tie-pins, and are responsible for the rapid growth of Abdullah Yafi's newspaper, *Al Siyassa.* This opposes the foreign policy of Mr. Malik, and wishes Lebanon to pursue a policy of "positive neutralism," along with the other "liberated" Arab countries: Egypt, Syria, and until recently, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. In numbers great, but still ineffective in power, the Moslems in some ways resemble the Catholic Irish under the Ascendancy. But there is an important difference: while the Irish were surrounded only by the sea, and across it, a nation of Protestants, the Moslem Lebanese are surrounded by a sea of Islam. This makes the Maronites unquiet, and the Moslems calm. For there can be few corners of the world where the Moslems are more broad-minded and easy-going.

A SOCIETY with as many tensions as Lebanon does not enjoy a crisis; and November, 1956, was an unhappy season. The weight of feeling was naturally with those elements which felt Arab. Egypt had been attacked, and the emotional weight was with them. The Arab corner of even the Maronite soul was aflame. Outside my bank, I was stopped by a Christian policeman who instead of telling me I had parked where I shouldn't, began a passionate interrogation about politics.

"Is it possible that Eden will bomb Egypt?"

"I hope not."

"It cannot be. We like foreigners, all foreigners." He then suggested. "Perhaps Eden is mad?"

"Perhaps."

"Tell me, is it true that the party of the labourers and their leader Mr. Gaitskell are with Egypt?"

"They are certainly against Eden."

"On my radio I heard Rome last night, and then I heard Moscow, and of course the Voice of America. But best is Cairo."

This interest in the crisis was universal. Crowds gathered round parked taxis in the Bourj, listening to the latest news from wherever it came. Only the booming, minatory Voice of Britain was impatiently turned off: as much because of the heavy unarabic accents as because of the propaganda. The press remained more or less free, though some editions of *Time* arrived with heavy cuts. One edition of the *Daily Telegraph* looked like a pattern for lace. No mention was made, however, of the four or five bomb attacks made in Lebanon itself. The only one of which I had personal knowledge was at the Foreign Office School at Chemlan, a mile or two above the house where I was staying. I heard a heavy explosion one evening, and then forgot about it. Next day I visited Peter Mansfield at the School, who was to be the only member of the Foreign Service in the Middle East to bring indignation to the point of resigning in protest. But he had momentarily forgotten his conflicts: one side of the School had been blown out by a skilfully placed and very large bomb. Egyptian, of course, people said—with not too much certainty.

Many Anglo-Saxons in Beirut (and there were lots of them, evacuated from all over the Near East) seemed to hope that the wilder rumours about Egyptian success would result in a reaction of scepticism. This seemed to me to miss the point of the popular mood, which was simple, and compounded of two emotions. The first was a shock that Britain, widely respected, even loved, in Lebanon (where it had appeared only as a liberator, in 1943, never as an occupier) had so flagrantly betrayed the Tripartite Agreement, which soberly guaranteed that aid would be given to Israel, or the Arab States, if either was the victim of aggression. If Eden had acted in August, when Nasser had nationalised the Canal, there would have been indignation throughout the Arab world, but not the same shock nor the same disgust. For while in Europe and America the issue of collusion might be argued academically, in the Arab East not one voice ever doubted that France and Britain had plotted the whole affair with Ben Gurion.

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The second emotion related to Egypt. Of course, children in schools believed that five thousand paratroops had been killed, and that most of the invading fleets had been sunk. Photographs of Gul Gamal, the Christian Syrian who had sunk the Jean Bart, were almost as popular as those of Nasser. But with adults, credulity did not blur the issue. They knew that Egypt was a poor country; they knew that it could hardly compete, even with its Russian jets, against two countries which manufactured jets, and had used them for a decade. But at Port Said a weak country refused to be weak; a people with no modern tradition of military glory fought on, and refused to surrender; a people whose governments had been frequently changed on the orders of foreigners did not obey the implicit order to overthrow Nasser. And with this Egyptian defiance a new pride in being Arab was evident. Even if military victory was impossible to claim, the Cairo radio, and when it was bombed, the Syrian radio, continued to repeat: France surrendered after one week in 1940, we are still fighting, and we shall continue to fight.

THERE are those who now argue that Egyptian collapse was imminent, and that Eden's greatest error was not to go on; having started to act, the greatest folly is to halt halfway. To argue about this is like arguing about what would have happened if Alcibiades had not betrayed Athens, if Hitler had been stopped in 1936, and so on. One can only have an opinion, and mine is that if the Canal Zone had been successfully occupied, Egypt would have continued to fight; if the Delta had been occupied, and the Nile Valley, then the arms already issued to the "army of liberation" would have been used in an underground war far more bloody and far better organised than the war in Algeria, in which the Egyptians would have been actively supported by help from outside, and inspired by the sympathy of all Asia and Africa. Even the peripheral Arab states on whose independence from Egyptian leadership the West now seems to build hopes would have been forced by public opinion to cut off oil, as well as commercial relations, and a Suez venture continued would have been ten times more a disaster than Suez abandoned.

But the very strength of the Arab sentiment brought the proponents of *libanisme* to their keenest sense of danger in this century. If the wave of pro-Arab feeling was not checked (and the then Prime Minister Abdullah Yafi showed no signs of checking it) Lebanon would have had to break off relations with Britain and France. This was something that the ruling circles were determined should not happen. In November the government of Abdullah Yafi and Saeb Salaam was forced to resign, and Sami Solh with Charles Malik as foreign minister provided a régime of safety. This is not to assert that in the international field Lebanon paid only lip-service to Arab unity. At New York, Charles Malik organised the Arab team, and himself proposed the motion of sanctions against Israel. But internally there was a resolution to avoid a rupture with the West. This would have placed in danger the thousands of Lebanese in French and British colonies, who remit nearly eight million sterling to Lebanon each year. But more fundamentally, it would have thrown the Lebanese firmly into the Arab camp, with King Saud, President Kuwatly, and Gamal Abdul Nasser. *Libanisme* would have been submerged, perhaps irretrievably, in *'aroubah*.

It does not need vatic powers to foresee that such a tension between conflicting states of mind is at best an anxious comrade, at worst a catastrophe. It springs from a tension of greater magnitude, the conflict between West and East —and by East, one must mean India and the neutralist countries, as much as Russia and China. The acuteness of the tension seems in the East to derive largely from Western ambitions. While it lasts, the conflict lasts. When the day comes, however, on which East and West have common goals, or common agreement to pursue different goals, then Lebanon will achieve its destiny, to be half of Europe, half of Asia, without sorrow. Then a "true Lebanese personality" (at the moment a mere phrase of propaganda) may become a reality. But meanwhile the sorrow underlies the sunshine, the welcome, and the outrush of the caveborn river.

Desmond Stewart

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Stephen Spender

Orpheus : Adam : Christ

He who sings most sweetly is the one who listens.
Orpheus in the branches of the world a tree

Enchanted animals: but they had first enthralled him
—Swayed through his blood their rhythm he made music.

The sun hewed out his eyes; birds whistled through his bones:
From both he made the tunes to freeze them on his flute.

Before this, Adam was axle of Creation,
The hub of spoked unicorns wheeling round him.

Spitted on animal fire, he suffered beasts their names
And gardened life in Eden with magic tongue.

Then Christ, nailed to his Cross, received into his wounds
Bitter cup of curses men poured through them—

Eli eli lama sabachthani. This he changed—like
Orpheus taming spirits, Adam naming beasts—

To christening mankind bound here by endless love
Through agony transformed to joyous Hymn.

This poem was suggested by a sculpture in the Byzantine Museum in Athens, portraying Orpheus as Christ in the branches of a tree which is the world. These branches blossom into the heads of animals (perhaps part-human) whom Orpheus-Christ is taming.—S.S.

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LETTERS

"Angry Young Gentlemen"

THE "Angry Young Man" label, I begin to realise, has its advantages. People who attack one in print take so much care not to be angry themselves that all the edge goes out of their prose, and what started out as vituperation ends up very like flattery. Look at Randolph Churchill, writing in your January issue about what he calls "Angry Young Gentlemen": really, he sounds less like a polemicist than a waggish butler. However, my purpose in writing is to answer the one rather desperate point he makes against me, which is that I have accused Evelyn Waugh of anti-Semitism without producing evidence. I should have thought it was clear from the context that, in asking where the Jews stood in the "Great Chain of Being," I was merely wondering how a race so utterly classless could be fitted into Mr. Waugh's stratified, hierarchical picture of English society.

Whether or not Mr. Waugh is anti-Semitic I have no idea, although certain passages in his avowedly autobiographical *Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* suggest that, whatever his conscious position may be, his subconscious has some slightly ambiguous views on the subject. You may remember that Pinfold-Waugh is assailed by persecuting voices, making allegations that horrify him. One of these is that he is a Fascist; another that he is a Communist; a third that he is a homosexual; a fourth that he is an alcoholic; and a fifth that he is a Jew. Now one of these allegations is very much the odd man out. If I falsely accuse a man of being Fascist, Communist, homosexual, or alcoholic, I would expect him to be nettled and, indeed, would not be surprised if he sued me. But why should anyone be horrified at being called Jewish? The suggestion is not, by any stretch of the imagination, slanderous. Who, one wonders, could possibly be outraged by the imputation of Jewish origin but a man who was, at some deep subconscious level, allergic to Jews?

KENNETH TYNAN

London, W.1

"Morocco"

I QUITE agree that limited experience should not stop one writing articles about things, but really Peregrine Worsthorne takes it too far in "A V.I.P. in Morocco" (ENCOUNTER, January). When the French occupied Morocco in 1913 it had not been a hotch-potch of warring tribes over the last thousand years. Like most countries, it has had its ups and downs; sometimes warring tribes, sometimes—especially about the time of our own Wars of the Roses—good administration, prosperity, and internal peace.

The French did not turn it into "part of Metropolitan France" (that was Algeria). They turned it into a protectorate without dismantling the old hierarchy of Sultan, Pashas, and Caids.

"So far as everyday life is concerned, everything in Morocco is overwhelmingly French. Driving down the magnificent coast road from Casablanca to Rabat. . . ." An analogy would be: "Everything in England is absolutely tiny. Travelling on the magnificent railway from Hythe to Dymchurch. . . ."

As to these Moroccan leaders who want to turn Morocco into "an extension, with modifications, of Western civilisation . . . with its political, cultural, and economic roots in France," something seems to have got left out here. This was what the *French* wanted to do, or some of them. The Moroccan leaders recently fought, and won, a peculiarly bloody and desperate war to reverse the trend.

Then again; I doubt if Mr. Worsthorne really shook hands with the "entire governing, professional, intellectual orders" at that reception. A few of them may have been left governing some other bits of the country, which is quite big.

He is mistaken in thinking that the trade unions and the political parties were left behind by the French, so that the Moroccans must either maintain them or allow them to run down. They were built up by the Moroccans themselves, illegally, clandestinely, and often violently, in the teeth of French repression. Until three years ago, those of their leaders whom the French could identify were habitually either in prison or in exile. The King himself, it is as well to remember, was deported to Madagascar.

In speaking of the lack of indigenous "spiritual, moral, and intellectual values," Mr. Worsthorne seems to ignore the existence of Islam, a faith which resembles Christianity and has a common origin with it. Morocco is a society which owes something, but only something, to French example and goodwill. Its religion and the monarchical form of its administration and justice were there before France came. The attributes of modern statehood—democratic representation, trade unions, political parties, diplomatic contact with other states—were *withheld* by France, and had to be wrung from her by force of arms.

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All in all, it takes more than unexpectedly having to pay for a couple of meals to prove that a state doesn't exist.

WAYLAND YOUNG

London, W.2

[*Mr. Worsthorne writes:*

(1) Mr. Young must have a strange idea of "good administration, prosperity, and internal peace" if he can find such periods in Morocco's tumultuous past. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in the course of its lengthy account of Moroccan history, mentions, it is true, two "good administrators," qualifying its second reference in this way: "El Dehebi proved to be a good administrator, in so far, at least, as the Makhzen system of government can be considered as good. It consisted principally in 'pitting' certain tribes against the rest . . . a doubtful procedure . . . which finds an explanation and excuse . . . in the natural anarchy of perpetually warring tribes, and in the fundamental opposition—which can be traced all through the history of Morocco—between the settled urban population and the nomads." *Chambers' Encyclopaedia* ends its section on Moroccan history before the French arrival as follows: "No political or economic progress was made."

(2) I never wrote that the French turned Morocco into "part of" Metropolitan France. My phrase was "extension of." If I had been describing the Protectorate's constitutional status even this phrase would, I agree, have been ambiguous, if not misleading. But I was describing Morocco's physical impact which, on me at any rate, was overwhelmingly French.

(3) If the French had left behind them only the Casablanca–Rabat road, Mr. Young's Dymchurch–Hythe analogy would be in order. But their legacy includes virtually everything that still makes the country tick.

(4) Mr. Young is quite right that not all Moroccan leaders wish to retain close links with France. Some of the more fanatical members of the Istiqlal would like to lead their countrymen back into the Middle Ages. But many of Morocco's leaders, including the Sultan and the Crown Prince, were educated in France, and are deeply imbued with French political and cultural concepts. In this sense their roots are still in France, and the fact that they claim to be working towards representative government, and to be developing technical education, etc., suggests that they wish their country as a whole to retain its Western orientation. Of course they fought a war against France. But it was precisely because France would not let them implement the ideas that they had received from France. They were not seeking to cut off their French roots, but to be allowed to let them grow and bear fruit.

(5) As to objection 5, I had not intended my hand-shaking remark to be taken literally.

(6) Of course the trade unions and political parties were not formed by the French. But the ideas that lay behind them were received from France. Mr. Young seems to equate France exclusively with Protectorate officialdom. It is perfectly clear from my article that I was referring to something quite different.

(7) I do not ignore the values of Islam. All I suggested was that they had little relevance to the kind of modern, industrial State that Morocco is trying to become. What, for example, has Islam done for the Yemen in these respects?

Clearly, since Mr. Young has so profoundly misunderstood my article, it must have been inadequately expressed. But all in all, I feel his reaction to it displays a degree of deliberate obtuseness which, because it is unexpected in a reader of ENCOUNTER, would have been difficult to guard against.]

Music in Shakespeare

W. H. AUDEN's account of "Music in Shakespeare" in your December issue should be welcomed for calling attention to those perpetually neglected waifs of Shakespearian criticism, the songs in the plays. Until quite recently only musicians and historians of music seem to have paid them much mind; literary critics have generally ignored them, producers have dropped them, and readers have skipped over them to get on with the action of the play. Mr. Auden's prestige should lend support to those few modern scholars and critics who have been attempting to demonstrate that "Shakespeare's songs" were not merely sops to a music-loving Renaissance audience, but are often, in fact, integral parts of the plays in which they occur.

Yet it is unfortunate that Mr. Auden's remarks frequently appear to be based on erroneous assumptions about the purity of our texts of Shakespeare and the integrity of the Shakespeare canon, and that his comments reveal some highly idiosyncratic notions about the plays or dramatic situations that occur in them.

To take up textual matters first, I would call attention to the fact that after three hundred years of scholarship we still do not have a scientifically accurate text of Shakespeare's plays. . . . The most "perfect" text of Shakespeare—it will never be achieved in our lifetime—will be one constructed on the principles of scientific bibliography outlined in 1955 by Professor Fredson Bowers in his book, *On Editing Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Dramatists*; and it will be the result of a scholarly effort that at this moment staggers reason. If our present text of Shakespeare is unreliable, how much more so are the songs in that text, those orphans that for three centuries have been bandied about or banished by producers and editors at will?

Where even the bibliographical angels fear to tread a critic should at least be wary of his texts. When Mr. Auden asserts that in the famous dirge in *Cymbeline* "Shakespeare has lines spoken against an instrumental musical background . . . to depersonalise the speaker," he is probably building an airy castle in the face of a very humdrum fact. It is true that in the folio text of this scene the brothers recite the dirge rather than sing it; but this

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is certainly a theatrical makeshift, a petrifact in the first folio from some prompt-text hastily amended when Shakespeare's company one day found itself without actor-singers. The fact that the dirge has the stage direction, "Song," indicates the original method of performance, and the excuses the brothers give to the audience for *not* singing confirm our suspicions. . . .

Such makeshifts are not uncommon in Shakespeare. In *Love's Labour Lost* Armado twice commands his page to sing, but is put off by Moth's paltry excuse, "Forbear till this company be past." So far as we know Moth never does sing in that play. Similarly Balthazar's reluctance to sing in *Much Ado* much more likely reflects some theatrical exigency antedating 1623 than it accords with Mr. Auden's explanation that it reveals "the mock or polite modesty of the singer, certain of his talents," or "the annoyance of the professional who must sing for others' pleasure whether he feels like it or not." Moth, like Maria Callas, is simply temporarily out of voice.

A paper on "Music in Shakespeare" should have nothing to do with the song in *Henry VIII*; that play's single song is, like most of the play, the work of John Fletcher. Likewise in *Measure for Measure* the song sung to Mariana in the moated grange has been borrowed by Shakespeare and adapted for this play. It is not a very successful adaptation for, in spite of Mr. Auden's contention that the words of the song "mirror her situation exactly," the fact remains that the song is from a man to a woman, and not vice versa. It is because the song does *not* mirror Mariana's situation exactly that Shakespeare contrives to break it off at the end of the first stanza. And we can see why when the whole song turns up in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Bloody Brother* with a second stanza beginning, "Hide, O hide those hills of snow,/Which thy frozen bosom bears." Mariana has certainly been abandoned, but she is not as abandoned as all that.

Jaques' parody of Amiens' song, "Under the greenwood tree" is, according to Mr. Auden, "extemporary verse which he speaks, not sings." But there is no evidence in the original text for this assertion. In the original text the words of the parody are assigned to Amiens. This may be a typographical error since the folio gives Amiens two speech-headings in a row. But it is not necessarily a mistake since Jaques says to Amiens, "I'll give you a verse to this note that I made yesterday in despite of my invention." To which Amiens replies, "And I'll sing it." It is entirely possible that Jaques hands, then, the lyrics of the parody to Amiens who obligingly sings them. Additional evidence that the parody is sung, not recited, is the fact that it is set in italics like the first two stanzas of the song which were certainly sung. . . .

Mr. Auden does not much like *Twelfth Night* if one can judge by the strictures he lays upon Shakespeare's use of song in it. He notes that he has always found the atmosphere of that play "a bit whiffy." He finds the use to which Shakespeare puts "O Mistress Mine" rather shocking because "True love certainly does not plead its cause by telling the beloved that love is transitory; and no young man, trying to seduce a girl, would mention her age." But this view is contradicted by Ovid, Catullus, the Goliards, Campion, Jonson, Herrick, Donne, Lovelace—by, in fact, the whole tradition of western erotic poetry. The strongest incentive to yield to love has always been "But if once we lose this light, 'Tis with us perpetual night. . . ."

PETER J. SENG

Northwestern University
Evanston, Illinois

"Hidden Persuaders"

I AM glad that Mr. Kristol has climbed down from his high horse on subliminal advertising now that this method has been rejected by the Ford Foundation and is willing to concede my argument so far as to admit that "if it should indeed turn out to be influential, I would certainly be in favour of suppressing it." But he goes on pathetically to complain: "Though I wish I knew just how that could be done when governments as well as advertising agencies turned their hands to it, as governments inevitably would." Now I had already made this point when I predicted that subliminal advertising could be used to induce a neutral-minded public to accept another Hitler. I regret that Mr. Kristol is so slow on the uptake. But I am relieved to see that he too now recognises that we are in the midst of a war in which subtle and powerful weapons could be used against the mind by irresponsible individuals as well as by governments. Mr. Kristol is at this moment no more entitled to say that he is not manipulated by advertising in any form than a drinker of whisky can claim with absolute confidence that he is not in the least degree intoxicated. To stop subliminal advertising being used by governments, there are but two ways: (a) Getting the right kind of government and (b) exercising the kind of vigilance revealed in these letters and which Mr. Kristol was a little too glib in laughing off.

HENRY ADLER

London, S.W.7

[*Mr Kristol replies:*

The very first sentence of Mr. Adler's letter sent my head spinning. What I wrote in my original review was that the Ford Foundation had recently developed a scepticism about financing research in "social science." This, in Mr. Adler's letter, becomes the statement that the Foundation has "rejected" subliminal advertising. I cannot quite figure out what this is supposed to mean, but I have the distinct impression that Mr. Adler thinks of the Ford Foundation as some kind of American counterpart to the Soviet Academy of Sciences. To the best of my knowledge, the Ford Foundation has never had anything to do with subliminal advertising; and it certainly does not set itself up as an authority that either rejects or accepts scientific theories and techniques.

Mr. Adler "predicted that subliminal advertising could be used to induce a neutral-minded public to accept another Hitler." But why is he so certain of

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his prophetic powers? At the moment, psychologists differ over whether subliminal advertising will sell popcorn.

Of course, there is always a possibility that Mr. Adler will be proved right and subliminal advertising will succeed in selling popcorn, and Hitler too. We shall then certainly be in one hell of a mess. I'm not as sanguine about human nature as Mr. Adler, and I do not think any government is likely to be good enough to be trusted with such an instrument. My own inclination, then, would be to inaugurate a massacre of psychologists.]

A Voyage to Laputa—1957

THE PURPOSE of this letter is to clarify a few points raised in the December issue of ENCOUNTER by Mr. Wiles after his Gulliverian voyage to Yugoslav Laputa....

If someone has been taught that a certain thing *S* is black and hears over and over again that the thing *S* must be black, he is likely—the more so when *S* happens to be a matter of valuations—to take it for granted that *S* is evidently black; and so whenever he sees *S* he automatically shouts: "Black." This was the impression I had when, reading the article of Mr. Wiles, I noticed how after every few paragraphs he automatically shouts: "Terror." The main explanation one can find about the existence of terror reads: "Terror, *of course*, there is...." (Italics mine.) As to subsidiary explanations: "people look over their shoulders" and "there is always a suitable law in a Communist country"—Mr. Wiles will certainly not ask us to take them seriously. Why this emphasis on "terror"? Presumably because, Mr. Wiles implies, there are some countries where there is no "terror" —say, his own country? Now, if someone persists in reading the newspaper called "United Irishman" in Ulster, or if someone tries to be a simple-hearted patriot in Cyprus, or, say, as an ordinary lawyer of an English firm to believe in virtues of Communism—to quote only three haphazard examples (and I apologise for having been compelled to quote them to clear the issue)—he will experience many unpleasant things.... If Mr. Wiles had said or meant: Terror similarly as at home—I should have had no quarrel with him.

Two further elaborations of the idea are then possible. You may follow Marxists—and Marxism Mr. Wiles defines as "the holding of silly views on a number of subjects"—and simply state the fact: the State implies the police. Then Mr. Wiles' great discovery that, in the "Yugoslav paradigm," "terror is kept to its necessary minimum" applies equally well to the British paradigm—which, in its category, is a paradigm indeed—and to any sensibly organised state. Far from being a revealing description of a social fact the statement is a somewhat confusedly expressed compliment of the Yugoslav state organisation. Now, by and large, people are inclined to agree that the police is a bad thing. And so Yugoslavs are trying to get rid of the state *as much and as fast as they can*. Whether in this "withering-away" business you start with economic or with political institutions first, is a matter of concrete analysis, not of the holy book. In general Mr. Wiles would have avoided most of his misleading conclusions if he had taken care to think in terms of Yugoslav process and not in terms of an accomplished Yugoslav system. After all, the Yugoslav Revolution occurred in the *nineteen*-forties, not in the *sixteen*-forties....

Or you may again follow Marxists and say: If someone is a product of an Oxford college his scale of values is bound to be different from that of a Yugoslav partisan who is a product of a social revolution. As an Oxonian you may dislike some of the limitations of freedom existing *at the moment* in Yugoslavia. This is understandable and I have myself experienced similar feelings with regard to the institutions of Mr. Wiles' own country. Thus, visiting occasionally factories, I automatically ask myself over and over again how English workers can possibly tolerate the double "terror" of employers, private and state, and of trade unions' bureaucracy? Why workers do not manage their own affairs themselves and solve all those everyday questions of wages, organisation of work, appointment of managers, etc., directly and independently, why English workers abstain from running on their own behalf the factory in which they will spend not a part but the whole of their productive life? Why? No mysterious psychoanalytic terms like "totalitarian democracy" are required for an explanation. It is because they live in Britain and not in Yugoslavia and there is a world of historical differences between these two societies....

Now a few words about the economic doubts of Mr. Wiles: "Other lessons, however, are more doubtful. Has the system increased or diminished the rate of growth? And what was the effect on growth of, respectively, the social free market and the workers' councils? How do you control monopoly, inflation, unemployment in such a system? Is there *really* workers' control in Yugoslavia?" By now the lessons are no more doubtful and I hope to provide Mr. Wiles with a full answer elsewhere. Here I pick up the last and the first question for a brief comment. As I myself happened to be a member of a workers' council in Zagreb for a year, I may assure Mr. Wiles that we *really* controlled our enterprise; it was as simple as that. With respect to the answer to the first question I shall be glad if at the same time I can relieve Mr. Cserenyey from the amazement expressed in this connection in his letter in the same issue of ENCOUNTER. Take the most recent data: compared with last year, industrial production has risen in this year by more than 16 per cent, agricultural production by 35 per cent, national income by 22 per cent, real wage rates by 14 per cent. These figures evidently represent a *world record*. Admittedly, this year has been an exceptional one, for various reasons, but the general trend is absolutely clear. In 1950 the law (again a "suitable law") introducing workers' councils was passed. The basic conversion of economic organisation from a centralised Soviet-type to what is now known as a decentralised Yugoslav-type economy took about two years. During this period the pro-

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ductivity of labour rose significantly while the total output slightly fell. The fall in output was due not only to the conversion itself but also to the most unfavourable circumstances in which it was carried out: economic blockade in the Cominform, extreme outside political pressure which drove the military expenditures up to some 20 per cent of national income, an exceptionally severe drought in 1952. Since 1952 the economy has been growing at a *progressive* rate. According to the current Five Year Plan, recently accepted by Parliament, the real wage rate will be increasing at the rate of 7 to 8 per cent per annum in the next few years. By the end of the planning period, the steady rate of growth of the social product will be about 10 per cent. And a 10 per cent rate of growth means that the (*at the moment*) poor Balkan country where "the chambermaid brews up lunch for her family in the hotel corridor" will attain the present British standard of living in fifteen to twenty years: a century of development in a mere two decades! The speed of cultural and scientific development is by necessity even greater: with *still* 20 per cent of population illiterate—to illuminate the meaning of the process by a characteristic contrast—there are *already* to-day two times as many university students in Yugoslavia as in Britain. Is it then so difficult to imagine that this prospect of speeding up social development *several times* has something fascinating in itself and that people find worth while living and working for it? . . .

At the end, in order to avoid creating a false impression, I must stress again that I have commented only on what I considered to be shortcomings and misrepresentations in Mr. Wiles' article, leaving entirely aside its positive contributions. They speak for themselves. And if a fortnight has produced positive results, a month or a year may immensely extend the area of agreement. May I, therefore, conclude with a wish that Mr. Wiles gets acquainted more thoroughly with his subject so that next time we may benefit from his penetrating criticisms or, possibly—though this is incomparably more difficult—from his positive suggestions.

BRANKO HORVAT

Visiting Lecturer in Economics
Manchester University

[*Mr. Wiles replies:*

Terror.—I do ask Dr. Horvat to take my subsidiary explanations seriously, and to bear in mind that not every observed instance of terror could be related in a short article. The plain fact about Yugoslavia is that the majority of the people are opposed to the régime and frightened of its police. Dr. Horvat more than once implies this is not so. But surely a Yugoslav Communist is less likely to win the confidence of chance acquaintances than a non-Communist foreigner? Can he not see his compatriots are frightened of him? that his convictions more effectively isolate him than me my linguistic incapacities?

I have never been in Ulster, but many conversations with Southern Irishmen and Ulster Catholics convince me that terror there is incomparably smaller. Cyprus is another matter, and I am happy to agree publicly with Dr. Horvat that in this British colony over a few years there has indeed been terror on a scale known continuously all over Yugoslavia since 1945. Evidently this comforts him; it shames me.

Yes, both our countries keep coercion to its "necessary minimum." Only in a parliamentary democracy, where the unforced consent of the governed is a basic principle of government, this minimum is about a hundredth part of his.

Workers' control.—Dr. Horvat seems to imply that this was actually a popular demand in Yugoslavia. This is not true. Beginning in the Politburo, the idea filtered down to the Central Committee and after private discussion finally burst over the heads of the astonished population in 1949. The absence of workers' control in any country is natural; its presence is what needs explanation. There are countries where it is a spontaneous phenomenon: Poland to-day, France, Italy, and Spain in the past. Much as I favour it, and wish it every success, one must admit that their experience is not encouraging. As to the Yugoslav variant, it remains to be shown that it is anything but a different channel for Party influence over production. In individual cases, certainly, it has been more, but has not the Party regarded such cases as failures on its part, and hastened to correct them? After all, the Party believes in totalitarian democracy: it prefers the workers to vote the one way it wants, not the different ways they want. In so far as it succeeds, there is no workers' control.

Economic growth.—I am much more inclined to accept what Dr. Horvat says about this. But as an economist he will agree that a great deal of careful statistical work must underlie international comparisons. The official statistics of no country can be accepted at face value, and all must be re-calculated on common principles. Thereafter he may still be unpleasantly surprised by the performance of Stalinist economies.]

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BOOKS

The Philosopher as Superman

A REVIEWER ought to declare his prejudices. I approached this book* with the conviction that Heidegger is a bad man and a bad philosopher. A bad man, because he did not attempt to defend Husserl, his only distinguished teacher and a great philosopher, against the Nazis, but had rather adopted a contrary policy, with some profit to himself. A bad philosopher, because in *Sein und Zeit*, his principal work, he is unable to express himself with elementary clarity, even when elementary points are at issue, and because he apparently glories in contradictions. Attentive reading of Mrs. Grene's book has not left these prejudices unaltered; for it has suggested that the badness of the man and the badness of the philosophy are intimately connected. This is for me a discovery, and a discovery not unconnected with the criticisms of contemporary British philosophy which are often to be found in ENCOUNTER and elsewhere.

Mrs. Grene does not add an account of Heidegger's life to her brief (125 pages) exposition of his thought. There is a biographical note of five lines which ends with the information that he was Rektor of the University of Freiburg-im-Breisgau in 1933. And, certainly, knowledge of a philosopher's life is not a necessary condition of understanding his philosophy. But philosophy is not a formal and irresponsible game, unrelated to anything else, and every philosophical system has a direct bearing on practical life, through the picture that it gives of the human mind and of possible human ends. It should be possible to infer something of the political morality of Heidegger from an account of his metaphysics. A similar inference would not be too difficult, supposing that we knew nothing of the political outlook of Leibniz or Spinoza or Hume or Kant or Russell. But in the case of these five, the inference would rest on the content of their metaphysical doctrines; in the case of Heidegger, the inference rests on the style of writing and the purpose that informs this style. One might easily guess that anyone who wrote in this manner would co-operate with the Nazis and betray other and greater philosophers, when it came to the point of decision. The reason is simple: the style shows the author's indifference to literal truth and his obsession with power, with his own prophetic power to "annihilate" and to re-arrange the world at will in his own thought. This power-fantasy of the philosopher as a solitary superman, who destroys and dominates the world in his study, far above the heads of the crowd, is the central fantasy of German philosophy after Kant, as Santayana showed in *Egotism in German Philosophy*. For Heidegger, metaphysics becomes "my struggle with Being," with "the Western European tradition of philosophy" playing the subversive part of the Jews, and the pre-Socratic philosophers, arbitrarily re-translated, as the early German heroes.

Mrs. Grene criticises Heidegger, noticing his arrogance, petulance, his puns transferred from German to Greek, where they do not work as puns: his evasions and pretence of continuity of argument, when there is in fact none. At several points she admits that no sense can be made of his claims, particularly of his claim to a historical method. But still the assumption of her book is that his philosophy should be taken seriously, that philosophy written in this grand, oracular manner could be of value, if only he had developed the themes of *Sein und Zeit* further and not largely abandoned them in his *Introduction to Metaphysics*. Why is this assumption made? Probably for a variety of reasons. First, there is

* *Martin Heidegger*. By MARJORIE GRENE. (Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought.) Bowes and Bowes. 10s. 6d.

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the fact that Heidegger's thought has been in-France: surely there must be something in it? Secondly, there are the outward marks of depth, Secondly, there are the outward marks of depth, comprehensiveness, and importance in the Parmenidean phrases and in the rhetoric of Dread and Nothingness. Lastly, there is the idea, historically unfounded, that the great tradition in philosophy is that of unrestrained metaphysical speculation, which requires philosophy to take the place of revealed religion and by itself to answer all the questions of creation, sin, and death that are answered in the Christian revelation. Then the conception of philosophy as mainly logical analysis seems an arid and debilitating heresy, a betrayal. This seems to be Mrs. Grene's opinion.

But in fact the first great philosopher after Plato who made these unlimited and God-like claims for philosophy was Hegel, and the tradition is no more than Hegelianism. Every intervening philosopher, even Spinoza, acknowledged either revealed religion or natural knowledge, independently acquired, or both of these, as setting limits to speculation and as constituting a standard of truth. If these limits are removed and speculation continues in an absolute void, recognition of truth is impossible: there is then no *resistance* to any philosophical claim. The first requirement of a philosophical assertion—that it should be true—is no longer even considered, provided that it is psychologically impressive and moving. As revealed religion loses its hold on men's minds, we are in fact approaching the condition, which Nietzsche foresaw, in which any gigantic claim to insight by any would-be superhuman-philosopher finds its followers. And the fact that it finds followers proves nothing about its value, except as psychological medicine, since it has not been chosen as testable truth. For these reasons, philosophers in Britain and Australia, and in Scandinavia and America also, cling to the idea that their first duty is to try to make statements that are true, even if they are not always exciting, and to respect the bodies of ascertained truths which are labelled "science" and "history." To meet those of their critics who are uninterested in truth, a pragmatic apology can be found in the fact that none of these analytical philosophers has been friendly with Nazis or with other totalitarian parties, and that this is not an accident. Anyone who is a member of these parties, or is friendly with them, has to acquire the habit of making statements that are impressive and powerful without any regard to their testable truth.

Mrs. Grene threads her way through an intellectual slum with too little fastidiousness, even though there are some expressions of distaste. One page of logical analysis of Heidegger's errors about negation, the foundation of his system, would have been worth twenty pages of generalities.

Stuart Hampshire

Duckworth Books

The Cult of Shakespeare

by F. E. HALLIDAY

The Cult of Shakespeare surveys the fortunes of Shakespeare from the time of his death to the present day, the more frenzied excesses of the devotees of his cult and some of the liberties that have been taken with his work.

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History—Humane and Scientific

George III and the Historians. By HERBERT BUTTERFIELD. *Collins.* 21s.

Historical Essays. By HUGH TREVOR-ROPER. *Macmillan.* 21s.

THE American historian (by which I mean here, not the student of American history, but the historian of whatever field trained in the American graduate school) is bound to approach the English historical writers with a mixture of trepidation, dismay, and envy. What is most immediately striking, of course, is the effortless range of the English historian. The American system has evidently committed us to a rather bleak practice of specialisation. One receives letters from other universities demanding "a political historian of the early national period" or "a late 19th-century English economic his-

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torian" or "a French medievalist." People are put in slots and invite mistrust when they write "out of their fields." Against this, one views with unqualified admiration the dazzling versatility of the Berlins, Taylors, and Brogans who operate with undiminished confidence in a variety of countries, of centuries, and of types of history; the omniscience of Professor Toynbee is surely only a messianic exaggeration of a characteristic quality. Professor Butterfield, returning to an earlier interest in George III, has also written on Napoleon, Machiavelli, the origins of modern science, the historical novel, and many aspects of historiography; Professor Trevor-Roper, in this particular volume, discusses with unquenchable self-assurance everything from Homer to Hitler and from Japan through the Middle East to the British country house. Even Sir Lewis Namier, who in his concentration and his hard-bitten professionalism is much closer to the American model, has made brilliant forays into the diplomatic history of the 20th century.

How to account for this discrepancy in scholarly folkways? Fundamentally perhaps the explanation is that in England history is considered one of the humanities while in America it is all too often counted a social science. English historical writing is still animated by the classical tradition, where civilised amateurs equably suppose they can cope with everything; American is increasingly infected by the professional passion to sub-divide and conquer which has enabled natural science to achieve its triumphs. In the foreword to his new collection of papers, however, Professor Trevor-Roper prefers to link specialisation, not to Gentlemen v. Players, but to the philosophy held by the historian, or rather to the lack of it. The specialist, he suggests, is the historian who has lost his faith and is only left with facts. "A historical philosophy is incompatible with such narrow frontiers. It must apply to humanity in any period. To test it, a historian must dare to travel abroad, even in hostile country; to express it he must be ready to write essays even on subjects on which he may be ill-qualified to write books." Professor Trevor-Roper's *Historical Essays* live up magnificently to these ideals. It covers almost everything; and it is, he solemnly suggests, the unity created by his own historical philosophy which "will ensure that this volume is not a scrap-heap but a book."

This discussion of historical philosophy has a portentousness which hardly comports with Professor Trevor-Roper's characteristic gaiety as an historian. Is it perhaps one of his jokes? One begins to think so a moment later when he writes enigmatically and somewhat anti-climactically, "If these essays are united by any such philosophy, the reader will discover it." The only clue the author is prepared to supply the reader is that his interest lies not in periods but in problems, and primarily in the interplay between "heavy social forces or intractable geographical facts and the creative or disruptive forces which wrestle with them"—a doctrine which, coming from any other writer, would sound ominously like Dr. Toynbee's challenge and response. Professor Trevor-Roper can hardly suppose that this statement of interest—a statement, by the way, with which few historians would disagree—constitutes a philosophy. Yet presumably he is contending for something more than the undeniable fact that all the reviews in his book were written by the same man.

If there is an underlying historical philosophy in his *Historical Essays*, it is certainly not what that phrase ordinarily signifies. Surely his wonderful essay on Toynbee showed that Professor Trevor-Roper distrusts and no doubt in his heart despises the philosophical approach to history as it is generally understood. Can it be that when Professor Trevor-Roper talks about historical philosophy he means historical method? All this reader could discover in a very disparate collection of essays was, not a systematised body of explanation about the movement of history (indeed, the author, in the text, dismisses this sort of thing as a "useless armour of abstractions"), but a series of flashing insights into concrete historical episodes, joined together not by dogma but by temperament. Professor Trevor-Roper, thank heavens, is not a philosophical but a pragmatic historian. He hates obscurantism and *mystique*; and he shines, not by his philosophy, but by his practice—by the ease of management, sharpness of perception, trenchancy of exposition, wit of epithet, and unlimited confidence of judgment. And the unity of his work is not that of an historical philosophy; it is that of an historical style, by which I mean not alone his language but his whole temper, strategy, and intuition as an historian. I would not call *Historical Essays* a scrap-heap, but I am not sure that I would call it a book either. It is a tremendous fireworks display, with roman candles illuminating the dark ages, firecrackers set off under Professor Tawney, skyrockets into Karl Marx, and pinwheels everywhere. It is superb historical entertainment. One hopes now that he will turn to the sustained and primary historical work of which (as his essay "The Social Causes of the Great Rebellion" shows) he is so brilliantly capable.

Professor Butterfield's new book is quite another matter. It is an impressive and penetrating work, which comes at a valuable moment for the historical profession and may well, I believe, have enduring significance. I find it by far the most satisfactory of Professor Butterfield's recent

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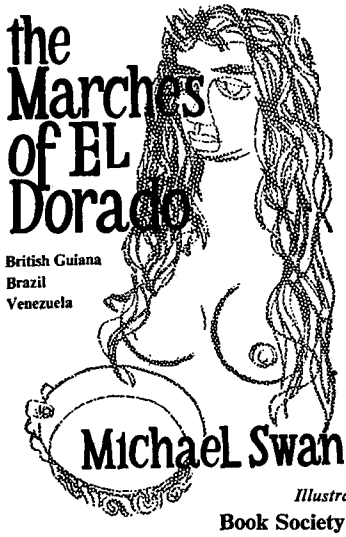
JONATHAN CAPE



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MACMILLAN

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enquiries into the nature and writing of history. It is, in the first place, a secular work. It lacks the brooding theological defeatism which has made him seem to argue elsewhere that right and wrong are so uniformly distributed in human conflict that the only sensible position for a practical man is neutrality. (This theme shows up oddly in Professor Trevor-Roper's book, where Erasmus, "valetudinarian, comfort-loving, timid, and querulous," is suddenly flourished as the model for the 20-century liberal who, it is suggested, ought to maintain an equidistance between the "rival orthodoxies" of Soviet Communism and—the Congress for Cultural Freedom!) *George III and the Historians*, instead of moralising in a muddled way about the human condition, addresses itself in a direct and cogent way to contemporary fashions in the writing of history.

Professor Butterfield's style, it is true, hardly warrants words like direct or cogent. Nor is communication helped by a falsely deferential note which insistently pretends a meekness that the author plainly does not feel. This distaste at blurting things out leads to an unfortunate habit of saying the same thing, or nearly the same thing, twice in succeeding sentences.

> *"The ideas that men have about the events in which their life is involved are to be regarded as a dimension of the events themselves. The things that men think they are fighting about are an ingredient in the very conflict in which they are engaged."*

Or:

> *"There is a way of studying history which atomises everything, especially if one slurs over the very kind of evidence which gives intellectual content to the things that politicians do. There is a form of fundamental analysis, excellent in itself, which—for lack of obvious safeguards—can lead to the erosion of the avowed political purposes that give meaning as well as cohesion to the events of history."*

Yet, for all the opaqueness in exposition, Professor Butterfield's argument hits hard at basic issues. In form, the book is an examination of the way historians have treated George III, ending up with the work of Sir Lewis Namier and his school (which Professor Butterfield calls "the most powerfully organised squadron in our historical world at the present time"). I am no specialist in the period and have no idea about the merits of many of Professor Butterfield's specific contentions. I have no doubt that Mr. Romney Sedgwick is right, for example, in reproaching him for praising an article which suggests the number of members returned by the Duke of Newcastle was nearer seventy than twelve. Obviously, too, Sir Lewis has badly caught out Professor Butterfield on the question of collectivity in scholarship. But to concentrate on this level of detail may perhaps be to miss the point of Professor Butterfield's book.

That point, I take it, is to protest against a method which tends unduly to deprecate the rôle of human purposes, ideas, and ideals and to reduce history, in effect, to social structure. That method claims a false precision by imitating the quantitative techniques of the sciences and by confining itself to the historical materials with which those techniques can deal. Less tangible and manageable evidences are consigned to a realm of historical inferiority; counting heads is deemed more valuable than achieving unverifiable insights through historical intuition. The result is to drain intellectual content out of history in the interests of an effort to give history a mechanically scientific character it cannot sustain. "Human beings," Professor Butterfield reminds us, "are the carriers of ideas as well as the repositories of vested interests"; history must therefore deal with both aspects of political existence and, when it refuses to acknowledge "the framework of ideas and conscious purposes which George III and everybody else possesses" it ends as imperfect and incomplete history.

The conflict that Professor Butterfield describes in England exists in not dissimilar form in the United States. A rather beleaguered group of American scholars sees immersion in intellectual history as the great means of rejuvenating political history; another, much influenced by the techniques and pretensions of the so-called "behavioural sciences," believes that political history can be reduced fairly efficiently to a set of social, ethnic, and economic tropisms and that thinking, in the main, is irrelevant. The debate between the two schools should be enlightening, though it has not yet produced in the United States—perhaps a question of range again—so subtle and searching a document as Professor Butterfield's book.

Yet the debate in both countries is conducted, in a sense, on unequal terms. The intellectual historians are fully prepared to admit the validity of the positivistic method up to a certain point; but the positivists are often unwilling to admit any validity to the intellectual approach at all. It would seem as if the logic of the positivist school were to eliminate from history what Professor Trevor-Roper vividly defines as its basic element—"the nimble mind, the burning conscience, the blind passions of man." All forces save this, he says, are determinable; the one which cannot be determined is "the dynamic element, the human mind."

No one denies the value of the positivist

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method. What is denied is only that it can handle everything which the historian must take into account; what is condemned is the assumption that things which it can't handle don't matter. In an eloquent passage, Professor Butterfield suggests that the ideal history must so combine structure and narrative that events are presented in motion but, at the same time, in depth. History surely can offer its best insights into the tragic web of causation and unpredictability which define the human drama when it functions as both chronicle and analysis.

I hope that Professor Butterfield wins his fight, for otherwise British history will reorganise on quasi-scientific lines and specialisation will triumph, as it more or less has already in the United States. He holds out a noble ideal. Perhaps it can inspire young scholars not yet organised under the flag of Sir Lewis Namier. Indeed, Professor Trevor-Roper, if only editors would stop sending him books to review, may well be the man to realise it.

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

The Persecution of the Abstract

W. B. Yeats and Tradition. By F. A. C. Wilson. *Gollancz.* 25s.

As everybody knows, Yeats compulsively collected occult doctrines and symbols. From them, he said, he learnt to choose "those that belonged to my life," and to build them into vast, ever-changing quasi-philosophical structures—"stylistic arrangements of experience" he himself called them—which, whether or no they were valuable in themselves, certainly helped him to go on writing poetry. His approach to this material was unconditioned by formal education, and he saw it first in the distorting mirrors of various late-Victorian interpreters. Later, of course, he came to read philosophy, including Plato and Plotinus, for himself. But his familiarity with the protean tradition of Neo-Platonism, which includes not only philosophy proper but also mythography, numerology, alchemy, astrology, ceremonial magic, and most forms of haruspicating and scrying, was at once passionate and random—a poet's knowledge, not a philosopher's or a historian's. Finding out what he did know, and how it turns up in his poetry, is a large and legitimate scholarly task, and to this task Mr. Wilson, with all the intense single-mindedness you could wish, addresses himself. His book "glosses" the late plays and a few "Platonic" poems only; but we are assured that there is more to come.

Mr. Wilson prefaces his commentary with a chapter about the sources of the occult images, which he calls, I think unhappily, "The Subjective Tradition"; the title, though Yeatsian, is misleading in the context of philosophy. Of the tradition, his own adherence to which Mr. Wilson candidly avows, we are given no very useful account, because we are told only about those elements of it upon which Yeats drew more or less directly; this would be all right only if we weren't being asked to accept the tradition as valid in itself. As it is, the many lacunæ in the chapter must be misleading. So is the failure to distinguish clearly between a philosopher like Plotinus and all the charlatans and dullards who abound in Neo-Platonism. You could read Mr. Wilson on the *Hermetica* without discovering, if you did not already know, that it is not a very early work of Egyptian wisdom. The "tradition" as here presented is, in fact, not very different from the one Swift derided in *A Tale of a Tub*. Mr. Wilson takes over Yeats' valuation of it, as he is perfectly entitled to do, but the absence of any serious apologetic makes it hard for us to obey when told to do the same. Some may even think that a series of progressively more vulgar misunderstandings of Plato is an odd way for truth to have survived.

However, this should not matter much, since Mr. Wilson's main task is to confront the plays and poems with their sources, and this he seems to do well, though not flawlessly (here and there he forces a parallelism). Yeats needed this material; it gave him that image of supernatural order he always required for his kind of poetry; and Mr. Wilson has shown how, in certain cases, one can find it in his text.

If I now give myself the disagreeable job of saying that this is nevertheless a pernicious book, I don't therefore reflect on the author's ability or his devotion to the tradition by which, he tells us, he lives. What is pernicious is the omnipresent assumption that unless one becomes proficient in this "tradition" one can never hope to read Yeats properly; and there is the implication that Yeats is worth our attention only in so far as he is related to the "tradition." Mr. Wilson himself is interested almost exclusively in the "Platonic" material, and remarks of this sort will show clearly where he stands: "*The Death of Cuchulain* is nothing if not Platonic." "Yeats was nothing if not a didactic poet." "This is all there is in the poem" (after a "Platonic" exposition of "Cuchulain Comforted"). So confident is he that Yeats' whole meaning can be found in his sources that Mr. Wilson is impatient when he cannot explain a passage in this way; whatever defeats his ingenuity he dismisses as "mere imagery" or "decoration," and hurries on to the

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next bit of symbolic wisdom. He is even capable of sweeping aside as merely misleading a comment on "Byzantium" by Yeats himself which doesn't happen to fit the reading he has arranged for the poem. In fact, he has decided—with the support, it appears, of other devotees—that Yeats can be allowed only this one sort of meaning, which is determined entirely by the conformity of his poems to a fixed system of symbols developed by the "subjective tradition."

Why anybody should want to treat a poet in this way is a large question; but clearly a lot of people have been feeling that it would be good to have some impressive substitute for the hatefully efficient symbolic systems of the sciences, and their confusion (as I would call it) is confounded by the tremendous muddle of meanings in the word "symbol." The poets, on the whole, have thought of the poetic symbol as analogous to, rather than identical with, that of magic; I think Yeats did so. Most certainly he would have resented such arbitrary limitations of his meaning, and I do not think Mr. Wilson can be right in supposing that Yeats would have approved of his work. Yeats did not bury the "Platonic" matter so deep merely to give exegetes the fun of digging it up; he thought it should be hidden, and says so. Like all the poets of his tradition (not the one this book is about) he detested "explication," and, as Mr. Wilson once belatedly recalls, abominated "abstraction." It is the body of his poem that thinks, not something ghostly inside it. One can be fairly certain of his reaction at being told that the first four lines of "Byzantium" "mean": "on an intimation of death, both the conscious and the subconscious mind are evacuated of imagery." Is this the root, the blossom, or the bole?

To be fair, one must repeat that there is no conceivable objection to anybody studying all this material, and we are entitled to be interested in the way Yeats collected and used it, whatever our views on its validity. (Mr. Wilson is naturally not the first in this field, and one ought to mention Miss Virginia Moore's amiable and revealing book, *The Unicorn*, which covers a lot of ground and even anticipates Mr. Wilson, who, oddly enough in view of his many acknowledgments and wide reading, does not mention it.) What I call pernicious is simply the way Mr. Wilson uses his research. For him the poems are wisdom in cipher. He cracks the cipher and is left, naturally, with a message, of great interest to him but none to me. A cipher you can either crack or leave alone, and this is pretty well the choice he offers us. If the poems were ciphers Yeats would not, in my view, be worth reading anyway, whatever the message, so that it would be no hardship to leave him alone. One might as well read the Smaragdine Tablet. However, the poems are not ciphers, and that is that. Yeats remains superbly —to change the figure—unkidnapped.

Ever since Saurat's early books, these kidnapping attempts have been made on every important poet who had any contact with Neo-Platonism: in English, Spenser, Milton, Blake, Shelley, Yeats. Even Shakespeare has not been immune. What the kidnappers are after, apparently, is a wisdom literature to comfort them in a hateful world by apocalyptic prophecy. They would really like to kidnap poetry itself, and educate it as the handmaid of their religion; and this seems to me pernicious.

However, it is very unlikely that they will manage this. One thing we may learn from this book is that there is little to fear from those Platonic storms now said to be darkening the Cambridge sky. They will shower upon us familiar weather—bad "history of ideas" with its assumption that a work of art is made up of ideas plus decoration; and a method of exegesis, not academically respectable, which treats a poem as a commentary on its sources. Not very dangerous; but poetry has enemies enough, and it seems deplorable that professional exponents of it should add, however insignificantly, to the difficulties under which its endless defence has to be conducted.

Frank Kermode

A Literature of Signs

Popular Fiction 100 Years Ago. By MARGARET DALZIEL. *Cohen and West.* 20s.

THE REVOLUTION in the publishing of popular reading-matter that took place in the 1840's quickly established those basic physical characteristics which are even more evident in the field to-day: the sheer mass and the extraordinary cheapness. Towards the end of the decade there began a powerful counter-attack from organisations and individuals with an interest in the moral tone of popular publications. It is the development of this revolution, counter-attack, and regrouping during the period 1840–55 to which Miss Dalziel devotes the first half of her study. Two figures emerge as worthy to join the extending gallery of nervous buccaneers in the history of British popular publishing—Lloyd and Reynolds. Lloyd insisting to Sala, who was then making blocks for the "penny dreadfuls," "the eyes must be larger, and there must be more blood . . . much more blood" was showing the same obsessive

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attention to detail in deciding what the people want, the same intensively active but fundamentally barren reaction, as one meets later in men like Harmsworth and Elias.

When he began to pour out novels in the mid-forties, Reynolds seems to have been a Hank Janson born out of due time. Technically, he had not the advantage of being able to model himself on a higher-browed literature of violence: socially, he was risking conflict with authorities which did not hesitate to take effective measures against writers whose sensationalism stepped outside certain permitted areas. But it is plain that Reynolds had a potential power quite denied to writers of superficially similar tales in, say, the *Family Herald*. Nisida, the heroine in close-fitting black velvet of *Wagner: the Wehr-Wolf* is the sister of many a gangster's moll in contemporary fiction.

But after 1847 the sustained attack by the Establishment had its effect. Miss Dalziel is not sure that this attack caused Reynolds's change of style, though she suspects that it did: certainly he became thereafter much as other writers. Indeed, the most remarkable social feature in this whole history is the degree to which outside bodies could not only bring pressure to bear on "undesirable" writers, overtly or indirectly, but also the extent to which these bodies themselves set about producing popular literature of a "better" kind, that is, semi-official "healthful fiction." So strong was the Establishment's influence that, in discussing the late 'forties and early 'fifties, Miss Dalziel can talk of a "purified" penny press: "about half of the cheap periodicals that first appeared between 1846–56 and established themselves at all were sponsored by religious organisations or reflected positive religious opinions." Though at best this type of literature might produce some of the good things in *Household Words*, more often it exhibited loveless moralising, a crass idealisation of labour as a training in moral strength, and a self-righteous acceptance of the cash-nexus. The popular literature of mid-20th-century democracy is not pleasant to contemplate; but here at least is one wood we are well out of.

In the second half of her book Miss Dalziel analyses, often acutely, the manners and characters, the attitudes and assumptions of this fiction. If she is less effective on its precise appeals and possible effects, she illustrates here an inadequacy that handicaps us all. We lack, first, any considerable examination of the social significance of popular fiction; what we have are some scattered brilliant insights by such writers as Tocqueville and Ortega. We lack also anything approaching a thorough technical discussion of the nature of the appeal made by this

Anthony West

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fiction. The tools we use in discussing "serious" fiction do not help here as much as we expect. Miss Dalziel remarks that we introduce moral judgments into the discussion of popular literature more than into that of "serious" literature. I think rather that we introduce them less relevantly, too soon or too crudely, and so miss the really telling inner movement of this literature. To stress its lack of moral and psychological complexity does not take us far towards understanding; for this is a literature of conventional signs, signs which yet point to a submerged mass of blind but gripping *feelings* about experience. The stated morality is less important than the vast groundswell of feelings assumed and the rhythms which its movements trace. The imaginative sense of life which comes out between the lines—not by intellectual effort on the reader's part—tells us more than the conscientious moral formalities. Miss Dalziel hints at this, rather as though she is happening on something whose significance she does not realise, when she notes the strength of "pure feeling" in this kind of literature and comments on its assumption that youth and youthful love —brief as they are—are finally the only interesting and lively parts of life, the short sunlit periods in which we can all be Don Juan or the beautiful Lady Isabel, Marlon Brando, or Grace Kelly. What makes this fiction so often instinct with pathos, I think, is the sad repetitive mechanism of the brief, time-bound life it assumes. This underground quality is to be found in much popular literature of the last 150 years, and is indeed a stoic undercurrent in much British working-class life. Arnold Bennett's art lay in his ability to make poetry out of just this sense.

In her final chapter Miss Dalziel makes a brave but scrappy attempt to draw comparisons between mid-19th century and contemporary popular writing. She decides that on the whole popular literature has deteriorated, but supports her assertion with very little evidence. There is space to do no more than indicate some of the considerations which seem essential to any analysis of change in popular literature at the present time. The first is that the new-style popular fiction—that in the glossy magazines, for example—is classless or potentially classless. It must be, to sell sufficiently widely. This ensures that the properties, the assumptions, and the tones of popular fiction are moving towards those of the unlocal and unrooted world of the slicker advertising artists and copywriters, of the TV pals and all the other friendly persuaders. These people have to dream up a life in which their "characters" can move and have their being, because no specifically identifiable life would be widely acceptable in our finely class-modulated society. Inevitably, they dream up a life which looks vaguely mid-middle-class but is not even exactly that—is other-directed, personalised rather than personal, emotionally self-conscious rather than emotional, a plasterboard estate in a trivial warm delta of "interesting table-settings" and bright little responses to "problems that tease us all sometimes." When the earlier writer of popular fiction was expressing Establishment attitudes he often employed a pompous rhetoric. The new style has the thin horizontality of a smart progressivist world in which we know only that we are lucky consumers. The graduates who peddle this kind of thing are no improvement on the parsons' wives who used to write starchily for the edification of their parishioners.

But some forms of popular writing may be in part instances of resistance to the new Establishment of the smooth smilers. The sex-and-violence novels exist in a world where moral values are irrelevant or at best *suspect*. They differ from Reynolds' novels most strikingly in this; but no more than, say, Hemingway differs from Dickens when Dickens is formally moralistic. It was Hemingway who asserted a quarter of a century ago that one can no longer decently use all "the big words." Who, in the age of the mass-media, can use words like "neighbourliness," "dedication," "loyalty," and "joy" without an inhibiting ambiguity? Curiously, a semi-resistance literature such as that of the sex-and-violence novels is more energetic than that which underwrites Establishment values. A popular literature of conventional signs and moral formalities lacks energy (but many communicate the sense of a heavy rhythm of experience behind the statements, like a slow and conventional but—underneath—powerful and unexpectant peasantwoman). A literature outside the moral fields has to work for its living. One is a literature of situation, the other a literature of direct emotional energy.

But this leads into questions well outside the scope of most of Miss Dalziel's book, though they haunt her final chapter. In her chosen decade and a half she has read exhaustively, established the pattern of development, and analysed the main conventions. In this field most of us tend to assume more than has been proved by the evidence; or we select only that small part from the vast bulk of 19th-century popular literature which suits our prior notions. Miss Dalziel's patient and intelligent deployment offers the sort of detailed evidence needed if we are to understand better both the nature of popular literature in itself and the changes in popular taste during the last century.

Richard Hoggart

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Breaking the Silence

Voyage from Spring. By MICHAEL BALDWIN. *Routledge and Kegan Paul.* 10s. 6d.

A Dead Sparrow. By BRIAN GILES. *Abelard-Schuman.* 12s. 6d.

Home Truths. By ANTHONY THWAITE. *The Marvell Press.* 10s. 6d.

Reading a Medal. By TERENCE TILLER. *The Hogarth Press.* 10s. 6d.

The Strange Islands. By THOMAS MERTON. *Hollis and Carter.* 15s.

Act One. By RANDOLPH STOW. *Macdonald.* 10s. 6d.

A Beginning. By DOM MORAES. *The Parton Press. Secker & Warburg.* 8s. 6d.

READING Mr. Michael Baldwin's *Voyage From Spring*, a modest, tasteful, careful volume, I kept thinking, what does the blurb intend when it talks of "cautious statements"? It may be all right if you can make a positive virtue out of negativeness, make your cautiousness attitudinise a bit (a sort of poetic hunger strike) as Mr. Donald Davie does: but what about a poem like "Snowfall"? It begins with a descriptive set-piece:

> *Snow fell on London, calling halt;*
> *And the pavement, itself so fragile,*
> *Was pressed upon by this ponderous*
> *Paradox of the frail*
> *And truly blank . . .*

Then comes the worried question, what did it mean? (It's not me asking it, it's the poet).

> *What did it mean, this swathing*
> *Of the downtrodden wounded acre*
> *In scalding white, this bathing*
> *Of landscape till the eye would break?*

There the poet breaks into something richer, aided by a stronger beat and rhyme. But then comes the old quiet let-down:

> *One wondered whether the loaded earth. . . .*

Did one (i.e., the poet, who should be I, not one) really wonder that, or did one think one ought to wonder something? The poet is right to feel the need to make something of his snowfall (in the sense that the aggressive drunk says "Want to make something of it, mate?") but nothing really *is* made of it, it slides away into peaceful muffled cosiness like the snow itself. Many of the descriptions in this book have a simple grace, but often they get fudged into false literary patterns, which spoil the lyric impulse by too much manipulation, a too careful cross-referencing of nouns and adjectives (e.g., the beginning of "Poem in a Park").

Mr. Brian Giles, too, is a meticulous caresser and arranger of language. *A Dead Sparrow* again has felicities but somehow never seems to find it necessary to wrestle with language, as Jacob wrestled with the angel, and at times plays word games that come dangerously near the trivial:

> *Now when I slept, I dreamed.*
> *That's not, of course, precisely what I mean—*
> *If I may say that I mean anything*
> *At all, you'll understand me best, I think,*
> *If I suggest—a way of speaking only—*
> *That when I slept, I dreamed.*

I doubt if any first volume can get away with that sort of thing.

As long as both remain smoothly negative, I don't think there's much to choose between the tasteful sigh and the cocked snook, except that the latter is rather more astringent. When Mr. Anthony Thwaite writes

> *Under the winter sun, sitting by sea,*
> *A bird turned on a wing and said to me:*
> *"Why do you thus sit idly by the shore*
> *Making your head and arse so red and sore?"*

it doesn't make us think how bold, how Henry Millerish: but we do respond: the shock is tiny, the trick crude, but it is still new enough (as the fastidious metropolitan-pastoral tradition is perhaps not) to make us read on and enjoy another of the now fashionable poems about writing poems, the difference between the "tatty world" of the artist and (with tongue in cheek) the human heart. But a sharp awareness of such 'smooth lonely abstractions' may be of limited value if it remains a mere intellectual attitude, taken up, or so it seems, in advance of the poem rather than emerging from it as a genuine creative discovery. But if *Home Truths* contains its share of accomplished and effective contrivance, at his best, as in "From Home," Mr. Thwaite allows himself to head towards something deeper and begins to move us.

Mr. Terence Tiller's new collection *Reading A Medal* (his first for ten years) is, in its blend of the subtle and the lyrical, the most polished and mature of the books under review. His singing line, while always original, contains profound echoes from the silver age of English romanticism which few of his younger contemporaries would risk (or bring off, if they did risk it) and which come to us like zephyrs in a desert:

> *Dance heart and flower while you may;*
> *the earth you spread gallanted once:*
> *much has been paid and is to pay*
> *for generations of the dance.*

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A garden is a widowed grief
and every grief a vase of bells
and every bell a human life
and every life a wave that falls.

In his best work Mr. Tiller allows nothing to interfere with his exceptional lyrical gift. He knows there is no real alternative to what he calls, in "Resolutions of a Committee," "virginal wrestling... for possession of the lunar nine-quetzal-clad Muses, and their return." And in the three lyrics called "Brompton Cemetery," from which the eight lines quoted above are taken, the Muses return in triumph.

I have not read Thomas Merton's prose autobiography *Elected Silence*, but I should gather from his collection of poems *The Strange Islands* that he is an intelligent man who tries to think out for himself the supreme problem of describing man's relation with God. He obviously has an interesting mind but his poems, though sincere in what they search after, seem, as poems, clumsy and unreal. He starts off with a promising title, "How to Enter a Big City," but he has not the varied dramatic powers of an Enright, and what he gives us is a shiny, monotonous American catalogue occasionally illustrated by Sitwellian pictures of the bone beneath:

There are huge clouds all over the sky.
Rivers smell of gasoline.
Cars after cars after cars, and then
A little yellow street goes by without a murmur.
There came a man
("Those are radios, that were his eyes")
Who offered to sell us his bones.

Elsewhere, Mr. Merton abandons the search after imagery altogether and offers bleak general statements in the manner of *The Rock* yet lacking the artistic (I don't say the spiritual) authority that keeps Eliot's metaphysics, if not warm, at least warmer.

Truth has never existed, there is no Truth.
Everything is vague. The world, O Leader,
Which only seems to exist,
Needs to be expressed in words which seem
to exist.

To the theologian *The Strange Islands* may be of great value: I don't know. But as poetry it neither suggests enough (of such attempts as "weep along the hills like turpentine" and "parabolas of milk and iron" I can only say that they seem to me *non ben trovati*) nor states with enough intensity to match its subject-matter.

Mr. Randolph Stow, who for some reason unknown to me wears, alone of this batch of poets, the accolade of the Poetry Book Society, has none

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of Mr. Merton's spiritual humility. He speaks in a loud, confident, vigorous voice, thumping along, wearing even his generalisations with Whitmanesque panache:

Do I idealise?
Then—I idealise.

Mr. Stow's Australian background may make his material potentially what the advertisements call excitingly different, but by the time he has put it into verse full of old-fashioned romanticism and a truly remarkable technical imitativeness, little that is "different" remains. A poem called "The Man Outside" for example

When I go down
From this high hill to the cities turning in time

takes us straight, not to the outback, but to Dylan's Wales. He is better in a poem called "Terror." Here childhood loneliness may also stand for the adult loneliness of an Australian writer:

Being a child he loved his own road best
And so, far from the homestead, with the light
Failing, he proudly took his way alone,
Lost all the cousins, and was seized by night.

There is more of authentic felt experience in the quatrains of that poem (we even swallow the bombastic swaggering conclusion) than in the many grand pastiches of past literature which take up a good deal of space in *Act One* and which one fears may be what Mr. Stow's publishers have in mind when they refer to the assurance with which he handles words.

I have left till last the most remarkable and original new poet on the list. In *A Beginning*, the nineteen-year-old Indian poet Dom Moraes writes:

I am too often silent
And I often think that rivers, streams, the sea
Owe their wholeness to their never being silent.

One thinks at once, how true that is: positive statement, overcoming silence, not only the silence of saying nothing but the pseudo-silence of speaking but having nothing to say. There is a deep awareness of the true nature of poetry in that statement. The indifferent poet, neither good nor bad, is like a turn in an old-fashioned concert party. He comes on, bows (yes, he has brought his music), gives us a contrasting group of pieces, tender, bawdy, or what not: we listen politely, clap, smile, nod to friends. The performer retires. Perhaps he will come back next year. Perhaps we shall recognise him. Perhaps not.

If I feel confident that I shall recognise Mr. Moraes again, this is not because he will be just the same (only perhaps wearing a different false nose) but because, being already, as these twenty-one powerful pieces show, a considerable poet, there is no end to the living possibilities his not being silent may contain. Meanwhile, none of these poems gives the impression of being written for the sake of writing. They don't only say something individually, they add up to something, they are a book and not a collection painfully squeezed together from scattered back numbers. Using strong regular metres throughout, he is neither an academic slicker nor a ponderous Campbellite. The strangeness which touches his work is not laboriously searched for, but the natural expression of the distant climates, legends, and people he has come from. He can write a funny poem which is really funny because there is no posing, like the poem on Wordsworth which begins "To-day they brought me a message: Wordsworth was dead." The immediacy of that "to-day" is pure poetry, it couldn't be the beginning of a wry academic lecture in verse form.

"Are you sure," I said, "that you haven't made a mistake?
"Oh no," they said, "not a hope. We knew him too well,
A gloomy considering bloke with the nose of a preacher:
A poet, in fact, with a charming affection for Nature:
Milkmaids (you know) and the shadow of clouds on the land."

That light poem is really a considerable achievement: few writers could contrive that delicate blend of mischief and affection, of fantasy and a poet's understanding and admiration for a poet, and rise through comedy and autobiography to the beautiful concluding affirmation: "I have seen him rise again with the crocus in Spring." The same curious and original blend of innocence and experience occurs in "At Seven O'Clock," describing the poet being worked over by a masseur from Ceylon, who becomes, by a most remarkable piece of writing, a religious symbol.

Mr. Moraes uses language with a skill that is meticulous but never finicky. He has both power and tenderness. At his best he can rise to a magnificent fusion of the flesh and the spirit (he can write about sex without reminding us of Tottenham Court Road cinemas) and of religious intensity with human compassion as in "Cainsmorning":

Having eliminated his dear brother
He let tears fall and wandered off alone,

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Blaming himself in whispers for another
Error, yet knowing that he could not atone.

The authentic, inimitable key-word there is that "dear" in the first line; it is words as simple as that which tell us, if we listen, that the silence is really being broken at last.

K. W. Gransden

Novels and Literary Commodities

House of Lies. By Françoise Mallet-Joris. *Allen.* 15s.

Setuwo the Tiger. By Johan Fabricius. *Heinemann.* 15s.

I Like it Here. By Kingsley Amis. *Gollancz.* 13s. 6d.

It is only sometimes that the reviewing of current novels comes within measurable distance of talking about literature. The question that then arises is—what is it doing the rest of the time? At worst, I suppose, doing consumer's research on the commodities that happen to be in the market; at best, a reporter's job—commenting on aspects of the contemporary scene. Of the three novels in this month's batch, that of Françoise Mallet-Joris deserves to be considered as literature; it not only records something, it contrives to be something, in its own right. Johan Fabricius' book claims the same status, but really falls into another class—it is less a novel than the record of an honest concern with a painful present situation. And Kingsley Amis refuses to attempt integrity of either kind.

The dust-cover to *House of Lies* quotes from a review of an earlier book: "Before long we may have to stop comparing Mallet-Joris with Françoise Sagan, and invoke the name of Balzac." I can see no reason for doing either. Both the ladies concerned are young, extremely talented, and write in French, but there the resemblance ends. Françoise Sagan's sharp, modish, and elliptical sketches could hardly be more unlike Françoise Mallet-Joris' sombre, rather heavy, carefully built-up pictures of Flemish bourgeois life. And as for Balzac—this is a story of greed and family intrigue; but scale and method are, of course, quite different. *House of Lies* concerns an old brewer in a Belgian seaport town; rich, dying, and surrounded by relatives all anxious to get their hands on his money. How much the English novel has lost of dramatic possibilities by the breakdown of the family and the decline of individual fortunes; it is scarcely possible to

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JOHN CALDER

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imagine this story in a modern English setting. Klaes van Baarnheim, the brewer, is of a familiar kind, but by no means a conventional portrait; greedy, egotistical, and domineering to the last degree, the archetypal will-brandishing tyrant, yet individualised here by a capricious generosity and an intermittent, hideous geniality. The minor relatives and hangers-on are all drawn in a very decisive, masterly, and economical fashion; and the house and the town, without any elaborate descriptive writing, impose themselves on the mind with a strong characteristic flavour. But Klaes is only one pole of the novel. The other is his illegitimate daughter, Alberte. Brought as a girl from the brothel quarter of the town, she has lived since in the great house, little noticed by anyone and least of all by her father. When she is sixteen, and he is nearing his end, he suddenly realises that she is the one person in his entourage that he has never yet contrived to swallow up. She is neither an intelligent nor a sensitive girl—stolid, sullen, and impassive. But Klaes begins to cultivate her, give her clothes and parties, take her out to restaurants. Her mother, by now a complete moral and mental wreck, is still living in the quarter. She is half-crazy and usually drunk; and it becomes important to Klaes' purpose to get her out of the way. Alberte hates her mother's world, and is pathetically hopeful of reaching the security and solid comfort she has seen in her father's house. She is also quite incapable of taking any of the obvious steps to secure it, and obstinately remains her own unresponsive self. Her father's struggle for dominion over her, the complications of the mother's presence, and the alarm of the other relatives over her steadily strengthening position, form the substance of the book. Although it is all admirably done, for the first half there is no character with whom we can feel any sympathy or engagement; we seem to be looking at a genre painting, without moral or emotional significance. Then gradually it begins to appear that Alberte's refusal to exploit her situation is not, as it seems to all the bystanders, mere stupidity; it is a kind of obstinate integrity, which becomes in the end all the more impressive because it is wholly without charm. In the end she is offered all her father's wealth, on his death-bed; and she refuses it, and goes back where she came from, the only other place she knows. It is a drama of power, greed, and honesty, played out in the barest possible terms, without any adventitious aid from sympathy or affection on either side. The fact that Mlle. Mallet-Joris is very young has been made so much of that one would be glad not to mention it again; but it is indeed remarkable to find so much sombre objectivity, a sense of form so closely bound up with an authentic conflict of character, in so young a writer. She has an assured talent already, and has probably a long way to go yet. The translation by Herma Briffault is excellent; one is hardly aware of it as a translation at all.

Johan Fabricius has not been as well served by his translator. But Dutch goes less easily into English than French; and there is, one must suspect, an element of rather prosy explicitness in the original style that is far removed from the current manner of Anglo-American fiction. The theme is a topical one. Van Rhine is a Controleur (the English for it is District Officer) in Sumatra at the time when the Dutch are pulling out. He has been dismissed from his job, his Indonesian successor is in office, and he is just waiting to go. He dreads saying good-bye to Pa' Karim, the old headman who has been his ally for years. For Van Rhine it is the end of the road. Come of a long line of Dutch colonial officials, he was born in the islands and loves them, as those who have spent their working lives in Indonesia or Malaya are apt to do. He has suffered in one Japanese prison camp, his wife has died in another; he has no roots in Holland and nothing to look forward to. Just as he is about to go, a man-eating tiger begins raiding round the villages. He decides to make it his last job to get rid of it. This proves harder than he thinks, and the chase becomes an obsession. He is helped, and briefly loved, by Saina, a village woman; until she is killed through the jealousy aroused by their relations. Van Rhine is thought to be mad by his few remaining compatriots, for not going while the going is good; and in fact he becomes almost mad. Killing the tiger becomes the sole object of his life; he becomes a figure of legend. Ultimately he does kill the tiger, receives the awe-stricken homage of the villagers, but dies in the jungle afterwards, of fever and exhaustion.

The situation is genuine enough, and amid all the wrangles that surround a dying "colonialism" the tragedy of the European who has given his life to the East has rarely been fully realised. All the same, the treatment here has a little too much the air of a tract. Van Rhine's devotion and persistence is something the Indonesians will get from no one else, certainly not from their own people. There is no need to doubt the authenticity of this point of view, either as an emotional basis for the novel or as a historical fact: but it is too much insisted on. The old headman, suspect now because he has been an ally of the Dutch, is too simple a symbol of outmoded loyalties. The new-come Indonesian officials are too monotonously inspired by envy and inferiority feelings, and there is too much preaching, cast as the reflections of Van Rhine,

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but obviously and passionately endorsed by the author, about the "betrayal" of the Dutch Empire, both by the world and by uncomprehending Hollanders at home. There is much neglected truth in this; but it is only one side of the truth, and in any matter as appallingly entangled as relations between Europeans and Asiatics in ex-colonial territories, one side of the truth is much less than half. Very little can be said without attempting the impossible task of saying all.

The fact that one is tempted to discuss the novel in these terms seems also to show that it is really something other than a novel. Its motive force is not intrinsic to it—it is some exterior political emotion. The Dutch critics have compared *Setuwo the Tiger* to Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea*; but this is just what it is not like. The knowledgable technicality is not there, nor the laconic, suggestive manner. And above all it is a different myth. Hemingway's hero is a humble Prometheus, defying Zeus in the shape of the seas, the big fish, and the sharks. Fabricius's hero is the sacrificial hero, the dying god. And for all the honesty of presentation, neither the imaginative conception nor the political setting is big enough to fill this theme.

My own theory about Kingsley Amis is that he is the Tories' secret weapon. No one dare cast open aspersions on the Butler Education Act, and Mr. Amis is therefore employed to illustrate its appalling consequences. The boozy chumminess and the pamphlet about why he votes Labour are a blind. But this is only a hypothesis, and there are more theories about Kingsley Amis than his works will easily bear. *Lucky Jim* was a funny book, but it is putting too much strain on both its intentions and its achievement to suggest that it had much to do with literature. Since then Amis has gone downhill. He has one good comic invention and he is working it to death. The invention, of course, is his hero—the clot in the cultural bloodstream, the spanner in the educational works, nature's bagman at the literary evening party. He turns up again in *I Like It Here*, in rather improved circumstances —as a writer who appears on TV and has a lot of expensive journalism to his credit. He is sent to Portugal to inquire into the genuineness of someone who claims to be a long-vanished famous novelist. He combines this with a family holiday, thus giving the Plucky Little Wife figure and the Incontinent Child figure a chance to make their appearance. This provides the plot, such as it is; but it seems to have been too much trouble to work it out or finish it off, and it serves mainly as a mechanism for hanging chips on shoulders. Mr. Amis is under the impression that going abroad is something particularly snobby and upper-class—a notion which could easily be dispelled by actually going abroad, or even, if that is too risky, standing on the pier at Dover. However, on this simple conceit *I Like It Here* is based. At first it looks like a sort of romp, with a lot of old Punch jokes about foreigners being funny; also a lot of jokes about lavatories—a setting in which Mr. Amis seems to be much at home. Just the thing, in fact, for a planters' club library somewhere up-country in the dear old days. But this purpose is crossed by a low-spirited worry about literature—sad defensive jokes about Fielding, Byron, British Council lectures, Kenneth Burke, Dr. Leavis, and Henry James. The James joke is a good one, for the novelist is a Jamesian type, and his conversation is wonderfully parodied. For the rest, Mr. Amis seems to be the victim of an unfortunate obsession; he hates all this culture but he can't keep off it. It is as though he is publicly washing off the guilt of having read books and knowing the difference between Malraux and Montherlant; and then covertly taking great voluptuous gulps of his own bath water. Perhaps he should seek psychiatric advice; then he might either be able to keep away from the stuff altogether, or learn to live with his addiction and actually enjoy it.

The style is the self-consciously beery-belching-matey; with interspersed passages of high seriousness about the virtue of staying at home with mum and the kids. This is meant, I take it, to suggest that Mr. Amis' muse, bless her, is just an irrepressible old barmaid with a heart of gold. But this is just her fun. She isn't really a barmaid. And it isn't really gold either.

Graham Hough

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About Our Authors

REYNOLDS PRICE *writes of himself:*

"I was born in Macon, North Carolina, in 1933, a month before Roosevelt's first inauguration, when my own father like everybody else in the South who wasn't farming was trying to sell insurance to other insurance salesmen (who after four years of the Depression didn't have a thing to insure) to buy the Post Toasties and pork liver. I don't remember that but it's there all the same. I grew up in small towns and small schools and had my A.B. from Duke University. I came to Merton College, Oxford, in 1955, and am now in the third year there. My father had died in 1954.

"This story—the second I ever wrote and the first printed—is made out of two things, mainly: that death and, nearly a year later, seeing a girl in a Howard Johnson's restaurant—for about five minutes; she and the boy had only come in for ice-cream—tall and thin, in white dotted swiss, a stiff straw hat on her yellow hair. She began turning into Rosacoke, and I began this story. If I were ever to see her again—dressed that way and in the broiling summer and on the verge of saying, 'Does anybody but me think it's too hot?'—and could take a picture of her, then anyone could see why she offered a way into saying what needed saying then, and does now."

GERD RUGE belongs to the post-war generation of German journalists. Born in Hamburg in 1928. Has been assigned to Yugoslavia, the United States, Korea, and Indo-China before going to Moscow. Has been there two years, where he is the "pooled correspondent" for the German radio stations.

Born in Paris in 1910 of an English mother and an American father, the American poet and critic EDOUARD RODITI began writing and publishing in 1927, both in English and in French, in recent years in German too. His first poems were published in *transition*, *The Criterion*, and *The Spectator*. Ten years ago, *New Directions*, which had already brought out his critical study of Oscar Wilde in its Makers of Modern Literature Series, published in New York his *Poems 1928–1948*. A contributing editor of *Arts* (New York) and of *Prisme des Arts* (Paris), Mr. Roditi now lives in Paris. He plans to finish his first novel this year, written in French, and to collect a volume of his critical essays that have been published, mainly in American periodicals, in the past twenty years. He is also working on the first volume of his memoirs.

DESMOND STEWART, born England April 20, 1924; educated Haileybury and Trinity College, Oxford; has lived in the Arab world since 1948: eight years at Baghdad University, followed by a year in Lebanon. Two novels, *Leopard in the Grass* and *The Unsuitable Englishman*, as well as *New Babylon: A Portrait of Iraq*, have Baghdad as their background. At the moment is engaged on a book on Egypt which will be published by Wingate in June.

We inadvertently omitted, last month, a biographical report on Frank Hilton, who contributed the essay on "Britain's New Class." This is what he has to say of himself:

"FRANK HILTON. Born in London, 1929. Moved through grammar school to provincial university before spending two irresponsible years teaching English in Nice. Returned for a two-year stint of National Service in 1953. Since his release has been teaching, looking for somewhere to live, and writing a novel. He is an instinctive Socialist but dislikes the glib and fashionable keep-Leftism of many of the younger intellectuals as much as he distrusts the neo-fascism of some of their contemporaries. Although prone to moral indignation, he refutes in advance charges of puritanism."

IGNAZIO SILONE's story is excerpted from a novel, *The Secret of Luca*, to be published this summer by Jonathan Cape. The translation is by Mrs. Darina Silone. . . . J. P. MAYER is the editor of Tocqueville's *Œuvres Complètes*, which has now reached seven volumes. His article consists of material to be included in *Journeys to England and Ireland*, to be published by Faber in the spring. . . . The publication of *The Hills of Beverly*, by Libbie Block (advertised by Jonathan Cape in our February issue), has been postponed.

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